MEMOIRS

OF

MISS SIDNEY BIDULPH,

MEMOIRS

MEMOIRS

OF

MISS SIDNEY BIDULPH.

EXTRACTED FROM

HER OWN JOURNAL,

AND NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed for J. DODSLEY, in Pall-Mall.

M DCC LXXII.

MEMOIRS

OF

MISS SIDNEY BIDULPH.

EXTRACTED FROM

HER OWN JOURNAL.

AND NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

BRITISH MUSEUM

LONDON.

Printed for J. DODSLEY, in Pall-Mall.

M DCC LXXII.

THE Editor of the following ſheets takes this opportunity of paying the tribute due to exemplary Goodneſs and diſtinguiſhed Genius, when found united in One Perſon, by inſcribing theſe Memoirs to

THE AUTHOR

OF

CLARISSA

AND

Sir CHARLES GRANDISON.

THE

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION.

I WAS invited to pass a month last summer in Buckinghamshire by a friend, who paid annually a visit to his mother, a lady pretty far advanced in years, but extremely chearful, sensible and well-bred.

She lived altogether in the country, in a good old-fashioned house, which was part of her jointure; and it was to this hospitable mansion he carried me.

The lady received me very politely, as her son's friend; and I have great reason to be obliged to him for the introduction.

My friend and I generally dedicated our evenings to the entertainment of this obliging lady. She loved reading, and was a woman of an excellent taſte; but as her years rendered that employment not ſo eaſy to her as it had been, her ſon and myſelf uſually ſpared her the taſk, and read to her ſuch authors as ſhe choſe for her entertainment; nor was ſhe ſo confined to particular ſtudies, as not to allow us to vary our ſubjects as inclination led us.

It happened one evening, which was on the eve of the day appointed for our departure, that we had made choice of the tragedy of Douglas for our entertainment, when a neighbouring lady (a ſenſible woman) who had drank tea with us, deſired to make one of our auditors.

After the tea-table was removed, we entered on our taſk; my friend and I reading alternately, to relieve each other, that we might not injure the performance by a wearied or flat delivery.

When we had finiſh'd the reading of it, they each in her turn beſtowed high praiſes on it; but the viſitor lady ſaid, that notwithſtanding the pleaſure it had afforded her upon the whole, ſhe had one great objection to it. We were all impatient to know what it was. I think, ſaid ſhe, that the moral, which it inculcates is a diſ-

couraging

couraging leſſon, eſpecially to youth; for the blooming hero of this ſtory, though adorned with the higheſt virtues of humanity, truth, modeſty, gratitude, filial piety, nobleneſs of mind, and valour in the moſt eminent degree, is not only buried in obſcurity, by a ſevere deſtiny, till he arrives at manhood, but when he emerges into light, is ſuddenly cut off by an untimely death, and that at a juncture too, when we might (morally ſpeaking) ſay his virtues *ought* to have been rewarded.

We each ſpoke our thoughts on the ſubject, as opinion led us, when the old lady drew our attention, which ſhe always did, whenever ſhe delivered her ſentiments.

I ſhould think as you do, madam, ſaid ſhe, if there were not too many melancholy precedents to give a ſanction to the fable of that tragedy. I do not ſay but that the poet, who is at liberty to diſpoſe as he pleaſes of the works of his own creation, may as well reward and puniſh according to the meaſures of juſtice eſtabliſhed in the world; it might, perhaps make a better impreſſion, and indeed afford a more prevalent example, to the generality of young people. I ſay, therefore, I do not take upon me to ſupport an oppoſite conduct as the beſt, but ſurely the poet who prefers that courſe, may be juſtified in it

from every day's experience. If we always saw virtuous people ſucceſsful in their purſuits, and their days crowned with proſperity, there would be more force in your objection; but the direct contrary is a truth, which every body who has lived but a moderate number of years, muſt have been convinced of from their own obſervation. Amongſt heathens indeed, who looked no farther than *this* life for good and evil, and whoſe only incitement to virtue was the praiſe of men, or what *they* called glory, ſuch morals might be dangerous; but ſurely amongſt us Chriſtians they *cannot*, at leaſt *ought* not to have any ill effect.

On the contrary, I think it ſhould ſerve to confirm that great leſſon which we are all taught indeed, but which we ſeldom think of reducing to practice, viz. to uſe the good things of this life with that indifference, which things that are neither permanent in their own nature, nor of any eſtimation in the ſight of God, deſerve.

On the other hand, to conſider the evils which befal us, as equally temporary, and no more diſpenſed by the great ruler of all things for puniſhments, than the others are for rewards; and by thus eſtimating both, to look forward for an equal diſtribution of juſtice, to that place only, where (let our ſtation be what it will) our lot is

to

to be unchangeable. It is in this light that I was inſtructed in my early days to conſider the various portions that fall to the ſhare of mankind; which very often, as far as we can ſee, appear extremely partial; and no doubt would really be ſo, were there not an inviſible world where the diſtributions are juſt and equal. From this reflection I have drawn comfort in many trying incidents of my life; but in none more than the unhappy fate of a lady, who was my particular friend; and who, tho' a woman of moſt exemplary virtue, was, through the courſe of her whole life, perſecuted by a variety of ſtrange misfortunes. This lady, to uſe your expreſſion, madam (addreſſing her friend) to all human appearance, *ought* at laſt to have been rewarded even here—but her portion was affliction. What then are we to conclude, but that God does not eſtimate things as we do? It is ignorant, as well as ſinful to arraign his providence. We daily ſee its diſpenſations with our own eyes, in the various accidents of life. Why ſhould we not then allow the poet to copy from life, and exhibit to our view events, the probability of which are founded on general experience?

We are indeed ſo much uſed to what they call poetical juſtice, that we are diſappointed in

the cataſtrophe of a fable, if every body concerned in it be not diſpoſed of according to the ſentence of that judge which we have ſet up in our own breaſts.

The contrary we know happens in real life; let us not then condemn what is drawn from real life.—We may wiſh to ſee nature copied from her more pleaſing works; but a martyr expiring in tortures is as juſt, though not as agreeable, a repreſentation of her, as a hero rewarded with the brighteſt honours.

We agreed with the venerable lady in her obſervations; and her ſon taking occaſion from her mentioning that unfortunate perſon, who was her friend, told her, he would take it as a particular favour, if ſhe would oblige me with the ſight of that lady's ſtory.

She anſwered, that as we had fixed upon the next day for our departure, there would not be time for me to peruſe it, but that ſhe would entruſt me with it to town, that I might read it at my leiſure. It is drawn up, ſaid ſhe, for the moſt part, by the lady herſelf, and the occaſion of its being ſo was this: She and I had been intimate from our childhood; we were playfellows when young, and conſtant companions as we grew up. We always called each other ſiſter, and loved as well as if we had really ſtood

in

in that relation to each other. It was our continual practice from children to keep little journals of what daily happened to us; these, in all our short absences, were matter of great entertainment to us; we constantly communicated them when we met, or if we chanced to be separated by any distance, we made a mutual exchange by the post of our little diurnal registers, having made each a solemn promise, not to conceal an incident, or even a thought of the least moment, from the other; and this promise I believe was religiously kept up during a correspondence of many years.

I had a brother about three years older than myself; a very promising young man. He was an only son, and the darling of his parents: when he had finished his studies, my father thought of sending him abroad, but his fondness for him made him resolve to accompany him himself.

A better tutor or a better guide he could not have found for him; my father was then in the prime of life, he had no other children but him and me. My mother, as fond of me as he was of his son, and perfectly affectionate to my father, expressed her wish, that we two should be of this party. She said, she thought a young lady under proper conduct, might improve as

much by ſeeing foreign courts, and the various cuſtoms of different nations, as a young gentleman.

I was then about ſixteen; my father readily conſented, as he perfectly loved my mother; and we all four ſet out on our tour together. It was my lot, after I had been ſome time abroad, to marry an Engliſh gentleman, then reſident at Vienna; this occaſioned my continuing there ſome years, and it was during that ſpace of time that I had the occurrences of my friend's life from her own hand. As ſhe had kept up to the method we had agreed on of communicating every thing that happened, even to trivial matters, it generally encreaſed the bulk of the packets I uſed to receive from her to a prodigious ſize: theſe ſhe ſent off occaſionally, at nearer or more diſtant periods of time, accordingly as I gave her the opportunity, by letting her know our motions.

I have from thoſe papers ſelected the moſt material parts of her hiſtory, and connected them ſo as to make one continued narrative.

There were long intervals of time between many of the moſt important incidents of her life; but as the paſſages which intervened were either foreign to the main ſcope of her ſtory, or too trivial to be recorded, in copying her papers they were omitted.

I have, myſelf, prefixed to her ſtory, a very brief account of the lady's family.

Thus much, Sir, added the good lady, I thought neceſſary to premiſe to you, for your better underſtanding her hiſtory, which I have never yet ſhewn to any one but my ſon.

When I took my leave, ſhe put the manuſcript into my hands, with a charge to be careful of it.

We returned to town, and in leſs than three weeks I had the mortification to hear that this reſpectable old lady, by whom I had been entertained with ſo much friendſhip and politeneſs, was dead. Her ſon (my friend) was on this occaſion obliged to go down into Buckinghamſhire; it was ſome months before I ſaw him again, as he had a good deal of family buſineſs to ſettle.

When he came back to London, I offered to return him the manuſcript, which he had quite forgot. He told me, as he had all the original papers, *that* copy was at my ſervice.

I then expreſſed my wiſh that it were made public. To this he at firſt objected, as he ſaid there were ſeveral perſons living related to the parties concerned in ſome of the principal events of the ſtory, who might take umbrage at it. I told him, that this might eaſily be obviated, by changing

changing the names both of perſons and places, which I would undertake to do throughout the whole; and I was afterwards ſo urgent with him to comply with my requeſt, that he at laſt yielded. With his conſent therefore I give it to the world, juſt as I received it, without any alteration, excepting the propoſed one of a change of names.

MEMOIRS

MEMOIRS

OF

MISS SIDNEY BIDULPH.

MRS. Catharine Sidney Bidulph was the daughter of Sir Robert Bidulph of Wiltſhire. Her father died when ſhe was very young; and of ten children none ſurvived him but this lady, and his eldeſt ſon, afterwards Sir George Bidulph. The family eſtate was not very conſiderable; and Miſs Bidulph's portion was but four thouſand pounds; a fortune however at that time not quite contemptible: it was in the beginning of queen Ann's reign.

Lady Bidulph was a woman of plain ſenſe, but exemplary piety; the ſtrictneſs of

of her notions (highly commendable in themſelves) now-and-then gave a tincture of ſeverity to her actions, though ſhe was ever eſteemed a truly good woman.

She had educated her daughter, who was one of the greateſt beauties of her time, in the ſtricteſt principles of virtue; from which ſhe never deviated, through the courſe of an innocent, though unhappy life.

Sir George Bidulph was nine or ten years older than his ſiſter. He was a man of good underſtanding, moral as to his general conduct, but void of any of thoſe refined ſentiments, which conſtitute what is called *delicacy*. Pride is ſometimes accounted laudable; that which Sir George poſſeſſed (for he had pride) was not of this kind.

He was of a weakly conſtitution, and had been ordered by the phyſicians to Spa for the recovery of a lingering diſorder, which he had laboured under for ſome time. It was juſt on his return to England that the buſy ſcene of his ſiſter's life opened. An intimate friend of hers,

of

of her own ſex, to whom ſhe revealed all the ſecrets of her heart, happened at this juncture to go abroad, and it was for her peruſal only the following journal was intended. That friend has carefully preſerved it, as ſhe thinks it may ſerve for an example, to prove that neither prudence, foreſight, nor even the beſt diſpoſition that the human heart is capable of, are of themſelves ſufficient to defend us againſt the inevitable ills that ſometimes are allotted, even to the beſt. 'The race 'is not the ſwift, nor the battle to the 'ſtrong.'

The JOURNAL.

April 2, 1703.

MY dear and ever-beloved Cecilia is now on her way to Harwich. How inſipid will this taſk of recording all the little incidents of the day now appear to me, when you, my ſiſter, friend of my heart, are no longer near me? How many tedious months will it be before I again embrace you? How many days of impatience muſt I ſuffer before

before I can even hear from you, or communicate to you the actions, the words, the thoughts of your Sidney?———But let me not grow plaintive, the ſtile my friend hates.—I ſhould be ungrateful (if I indulged it) to the beſt of mothers, who, to gratify and amuſe me on this firſt occaſion of ſorrow which I ever experienced, has been induced to quit her beloved retirement, and come on purpoſe to London, to rouſe up my ſpirits, and, as ſhe expreſſes herſelf, to keep me from the ſin of murmuring.

Avaunt then complainings! Let me reſt aſſured that my Cecilia is happy in her purſuits, and let me reſolve on making myſelf ſo in mine.

April 3. We have had a letter from my brother George; he is landed, and we expect him hourly in town. As our houſe is large enough, I hope he will conſent to take up his abode with us while we ſtay in London. My mother intends to requeſt it of him: ſhe ſays it will be for the *reputation* of a gay young man to live

live in a *ſober* family. I know not how Sir George may reliſh the propoſal, as our hours are not likely to correſpond with thoſe, which I ſuppoſe he has been uſed to ſince he has been abſent from us. But perhaps he may not refuſe the compliment; Sir George is not averſe to œconomy.——How kind, how indulgent, is this worthy parent of mine! She will not ſuffer me to ſtay at home with her, nay ſcarce allows me time for my journal. 'Sidney, I won't have you ſtay 'within; I won't have you write; I 'won't have you think—I will make a 'rake of you; you ſhall go to the play 'to-night, and I am almoſt tempted to 'go with you myſelf, though I have 'not been at one ſince your father's 'death.'—Theſe were her kind expreſſions to me juſt now.—I am indeed indebted to her tenderneſs, when ſhe relaxes ſo much of her uſual ſtrictneſs, as even to *think* of ſuch a thing.

April 5.——My brother returned to us this day, thank God! in perfect health.

health. Never was there ſuch an alteration ſeen in a man; he is grown fat, and looks quite robuſt. He dropped in upon us juſt as we ſat down to dinner: what a clutter has his arrival made! My mother was *ſo* rejoiced, and *ſo* thankful, and *ſo* full of praiſes, and aſked *ſo* many queſtions, that George could hardly find words enough to anſwer the over-flowings of her kind inquiſitiveneſs, which laſted all the time of dinner.

When the cloth was removed, my mother propoſed his taking up his abode with us: you ſee, ſaid ſhe, your ſiſter and I have got here into a large houſe; there is full room enough in it for you and your ſervants; and as I think in ſuch a town as this, it will be a reputable place for you to live in, I ſhall be glad of your company; provided you do not encroach upon my rules by unſeaſonable hours, or receiving viſits from ſuch as I may not approve of for the acquaintance of your ſiſter. I was afraid Sir George would diſreliſh the terms, as perhaps ſome of his acquaintance (though far from faulty ones)

ones) might fall within my mother's predicament: but I was miſtaken, he accepted of the invitation, after making ſome ſlight apologies about the inconvenience of having ſo many ſervants: this however was ſoon got over.

To ſay the truth, I am very glad that my brother has conſented to be our gueſt, as I hope by his means our circle of acquaintance will be a good deal enlarged. There is no pleaſure in ſociety, without a proper mixture of well-bred ſenſible people of both ſexes, and I have hitherto been chiefly confined to thoſe of my own.

I aſked Sir George jocoſely, what he had brought me home? He anſwered, Perhaps a good huſband.--My mother catched up the word—What do you mean, ſon? I mean, madam, that there is come over with me a gentleman, with whom I became acquainted in Germany, and whom of all the men I ever knew, I ſhould wiſh to have for a brother. If Sidney ſhould fortunately be born under the influence of *uncommonly* good ſtars, it may happen to be brought about. I can tell you (applying himſelf

himſelf to me) he is prepoſſeſſed in your favour already; I have ſhewn him ſome of your letters, and he thinks you a good ſenſible girl. I told him you were very well in your perſon, and that you have had an excellent education. I hope ſo, ſaid my mother, looking pleaſed; and what have you to tell us of this wonderful man that ſo much ſurpaſſes every body? Why, madam, for *your* part of his character, he is the beſt *behaved* young man I ever ſaw. I never knew any body equal to him for ſobriety, nor ſo intirely free from all the other vices of youth: as I lived in the ſame houſe with him for ſome months, I had frequent opportunities of making my obſervations. I have known him to *avoid* many irregularities, but never ſaw him guilty of *one*.

An admirable character indeed, ſaid my mother. So thought I too; but I wanted to know a little more of him. Now, Sidney, for your ſhare in the deſcription; I muſt tell you he is moſt exquiſitely handſome, and extremely ſenſible.

Good ſenſe to be ſure is requiſite, ſaid my mother,

mother, but as for beauty it is but a fading flower at beſt, and in a man not at all neceſſary.—A man is not the worſe for it, however, cried my brother—.No, my mother anſwered, provided it does not make him vain, and too fond of the admiration of giddy girls.—That I will be ſworn is not the caſe of my friend, anſwered Sir George; I believe nobody with ſuch a perſon as his (if there *can* be ſuch another) would be ſo little vain of it; nay I have heard him declare, that even in a woman he would give the preference to ſenſe and virtue.

Good young man! cried my mother, I ſhould like to be acquainted with him. (So ſhould I, whiſpered I to my own heart.)

Well, brother, ſaid I, you have drawn a good picture; but to make it complete, you muſt throw in generoſity, valour, ſweetneſs of temper, and a great deal of money.—Fie, my dear (ſaid my good *literal* parent) a *great deal* is not neceſſary; a very moderate fortune with *ſuch* a man is ſufficient.

The

The good qualities you require in the finiſhing of my piece, anſwered my brother, he poſſeſſes in an eminent degree, —will that ſatisfy you? As for his fortune,—*there* perhaps a difficulty may ſtep in.—What eſtate, madam (to my mother) do you think my ſiſter's fortune may intitle her to?

Dear brother, I cried, pray do not ſpeak in that *bargaining* way.

My mother anſwered him very gravely, Your father you know left her but four thouſand pounds; it is in my power to add a *little* to it, if ſhe marries to pleaſe me. Great matters we have no right to expect; but a *very* good girl, as my daughter is, I think, deſerves ſomething more than a bare equivalent. The equality, ſaid my brother (with a demure look) I fear is out of all proportion here, for the gentleman I ſpeak of has but—ſix thouſand pounds a year.

He burſt out a laughing; it was not good-natured, and I was vexed at his joke. My poor mother dropped her countenance;

nance; I looked ſilly, as if I had been diſappointed, but I ſaid nothing.

Then he is above our reach, Sidney, anſwered my mother.

I made no reply.—Have a good heart, Sid, cried my brother, if my nonpareil likes you, when he ſees you (I felt myſelf hurt, and grew red) and without a compliment, ſiſter (ſeeing me look mortified) I think he will, fortune will be no objection. I have already told him the utmoſt extent of your expectations; he would hardly let me mention the ſubject; he has a mind for *my* ſiſter, and if he finds perſonal accompliſhments anſwer a brother's (perhaps partial) deſcription, it will be your own fault if you have not the prettieſt fellow in England for your huſband.

My mother reaſſumed her pleaſed countenance. Where is he? Let us ſee him. I forced a ſmile, though I did not feel myſelf quite ſatisfied.—We parted on the road, my brother anſwered; he is gone to Bath for a few weeks; he has ſent his ſervants and his baggage to town before him,

him, and has commiſſioned me to take a houſe for him in St. James's Square, or ſome of the adjacent ſtreets; ſo that we ſhall have him in our neighbourhood.

My mother enquired on what account ſhe went to Bath. Sir George ſaid, he complained of a weakneſs in one of his wriſts, which was the conſequence of a fever that had ſeized him on his journey in their return to England. It ſeems he had finiſhed his travels, on which he had been abſent near five years, when my brother and he met in Germany. The liking he took to Sir George protracted his ſtay, and he reſolved not to quit him while his health obliged him to continue abroad; they took a trip to Paris together, and returned home by Holland.

The name of this piece of perfection is Faulkland, Orlando Faulkland. What a pretty name Orlando is; My mother ſays it is romantic, and wonders how *ſober* people can give their children ſuch names.

Now am I dying with curioſity to ſee this man. A few weeks at Bath,—what

buſineſs

buſineſs he had to go to Bath till he had firſt ſettled his houſhold at London? His wriſt might have grown well without the pump. I am afraid he is gone to Bath only to ſhew himſelf, and that he will be ſnapped up before he comes to town. I wiſh Sir George had kept the account of him to himſelf, till he returned to London again.

April 7.——We have ſettled Sir George's œconomy within doors: my mother has been very buſy all day in fixing trunks, portmanteaus, and boxes, in their proper places; and, in appropriating the rooms for his men, which ſhe has taken care ſhall be as remote from thoſe of our ſervants as the houſe will admit. She ſays, ſhe knows our own domeſtics to be orderly and regular, but ſhe cannot anſwer for what other people's may be.

I begin to recover my ſpirits: my brother's arrival has given new life to the family; my mother thinks, that in *his* company, with a lady or two, there will be no impropriety in ſuffering me to go,

at leaſt, half a dozen times into public during the ſeaſon, even without the ſanction of her preſence.—How kind, how conſiderate is this dear mother! I find this was one (amongſt others) of her principal reaſons for wiſhing Sir George to be with us, as it will ſave her from the neceſſity of going to public diverſions, which otherwiſe ſhe would have done, rather than have me debarred the pleaſure of partaking of them, through the want of a proper protector. Every day lays me under freſh obligations to her.

April 20.——My brother has had another letter from Mr. Faulkland. He has been but a fortnight at Bath, and already has found benefit from the uſe of the pump; I wiſh his wriſt was quite well; I never was ſo impatient to ſee any body.——But, Sidney, have a care—this heart has never yet been touch'd: this man is repreſented as a dangerous object. What an ill-fated girl ſhould I be, if I ſhould fall in love with him, and he ſhould happen not to like me? Should

hap-

happen, what a vain expreſſion was that? I would not for the world any one ſhould ſee it but my Cecilia.—Well, if he ſhould not like me, what then? why, I will not like him. I have a heart not very ſuſceptible of what we young women call love; and in all likelihood I ſhall be as indifferent towards him, as he may be towards me.—Indeed, I think I ought to reſolve on not liking him; for notwithſtanding thoſe fine out-lines of a character, which my brother gave of him in the preſence of my mother, I have ſince drawn out of Sir George, who is always talking of him, ſome farther particulars, which do not pleaſe me ſo well; for I think he is made up of contrarieties.

Nature, ſays Sir George, never formed a temper ſo gentle, ſo humane, ſo benevolent as his; yet, when provoked, no tempeſt is more furious. You would imagine him ſo humble, that he thinks every one ſuperior to himſelf; yet through this diſguiſe have I diſcovered, at certain times, a pride which makes him look down on all mankind. With a diſpoſition formed

to reliſh, and a heart attached to the domeſtic pleaſures of life, he is of ſo enterpriſing a temper, that dangers and difficulties rather encourage than diſhearten him in the purſuit of a favourite point. His ideas of love, honour, generoſity, and gratitude, are ſo refined, that no hero in romance ever went beyond him; of this I was convinced from many little incidents which occurred in the courſe of my acquaintance with him. The modeſty and affability of his deportment makes every body fancy, when he is in company with them, that he is delighted with their converſation; nay, he often affects to be improved and informed; yet there is a ſly turn to ridicule in him, which, though without the leaſt tincture of ill-nature, makes him ſee and repreſent things in a light, the very oppoſite of that in which you fancied he ſaw them. With the niceſt diſcernment, where he permits his judgment alone to determine, let paſſion interfere, and a child can impoſe on him. Though, as I have already told you, he is very handſome, he affects to deſpiſe beauty

in

in his own ſex; yet it is eaſy to perceive, by the nice care he takes in his dreſs (though the fartheſt in the world from a fop) that he does not altogether diſregard it in his own perſon.

Are not theſe faults? Yes, ſurely they are; yet Sir George proteſts he has none; or at leaſt ſays, if theſe be ſuch, they are ſo over-balanced by his good qualities, that unleſs it be *you*, ſiſter (flattering creature! though that is ſeldom his failing) I don't know the woman that deſerves him. I did not thank him for the compliment he paid me, at the expence of the reſt of our poor ſex.

May 5.—A month is paſt ſince my brother arrived, and Mr. Faulkland does not yet talk of coming to town.—If Sir George had drawn half ſuch a flattering picture of me to him, as he has done of him to me, his curioſity would have brought him here ſooner.—My mother has mentioned him ſeveral times, and aſked when he is to be in town. My brother has taken a very handſome houſe for him in the Square.

We are all in expectation of this blazing ſtar's making its appearance in London. If he ſtays much longer, my patience will be ſo tired, that I ſhall not give a pinch of ſnuff to ſee him.

May 19.——Six weeks, and no news of Mr. Faulkland's coming! I'll poſitively give him but another week; I begin to think myſelf affronted by his ſtay.

May 23.——Now, now, my Cecilia, I can gratify your curioſity at full: he is come at laſt; Mr. Faulkland, I mean; Orlando is come! we had a meſſage from him this morning, to enquire after all our healths; he was juſt arrived at his houſe in the Square: Sir George flew to him directly, and ſaid he would bring him without ceremony to take a family dinner. My mother bid him do ſo; and ſhe held a quarter of an hour's conference with her cook. She is always elegant and exact at her table; but we were more than ordinarily ſo to-day. My brother brought Mr.

Mr. Faulkland a little before dinner-time, and preſented him to my mother and me, with that kind of freedom that almoſt look'd as if he were already one of the family.

We had both been prepoſſeſſed highly in favour of his figure, a circumſtance that ſeldom is of advantage to perſons on their firſt appearance: but here it had not that effect; Sir George did not overrate the perſonal accompliſhments of his friend. Now you'll expect I ſhould deſcribe him to you, perhaps, and paint this romantic hero in the glowing colours of romantic exaggeration. But I'll diſappoint you,—and tell you, that he is neither like an Adonis nor an Apollo,—that he has no hyacinthine curls flowing down his back; no eyes like ſuns, whoſe brightneſs and majeſty ſtrike the beholders dumb; nor, in ſhort, no rays of divinity about him; yet he is the handſomeſt mortal man that I ever ſaw.—I will not ſay that his voice is harmony itſelf, and that all the loves and graces (for why ſhould not there be male as well as fe-

male graces?) attend on his motions; that Minerva preſides over his lips, and every feature has its attendant Cupid.—But I will acknowledge that his voice in ſpeaking is inexpreſſibly pleaſing (you know how I admire an agreeable voice); that his air and motions are eaſy, genteel, and graceful; his converſation ſenſible and polite, and without the leaſt tincture of affectation, that thing, which of all others, would to *me* deſtroy the charms of an angel.—In ſhort, without hyperbole, that he is, what every one muſt allow, a perfectly handſome and accompliſhed young man.

I never ſaw my mother appear ſo pleaſed with any one. The polite freedom of his addreſs, the attention and deference he ſeemed to pay to her ſentiments (and the dear good woman talked more to him, I think, than ever I heard her do to any one on ſo ſhort an acquaintance) delighted her beyond expreſſion. I bore no great part in the converſation, but was not, however, quite overlooked by Mr. Faulkland. He refered to

me

me in diſcourſe now-and-then, and ſeemed pleaſed with me; at leaſt I fancied ſo. My brother endeavoured to draw me out, as he ſaid afterwards. The intention was kind, but poor Sir George is not delicate enough in thoſe matters; I ſhould have done better if he had let me alone. I thought of the converſations we had ſo often had about Mr. Faulkland, and could not help conſidering myſelf like a piece of goods that was to be ſhewn to the beſt advantage to a purchaſer. This reflection threw a ſort of conſtraint over my behaviour, that (fool as I was) I had not courage enough to ſhake off, and I did not acquit myſelf at all to my own mind. I had, notwithſtanding, the good fortune to pleaſe my mother infinitely. She told me, after our viſitor was gone, that my behaviour had been *ſtrictly* proper; and blamed Sir George for his wanting to engage me too often in converſation. You may aſſure yourſelf, ſon, ſhe ſaid, that a man of Mr. Faulkland's underſtanding will not like a young lady the worſe for her ſilence. She ſpoke enough

to ſhew that it was not for want of knowing what to ſay that ſhe held her tongue. The man who does not reckon a modeſt reſerve amongſt the chief recommendations of a woman, ſhould be no huſband for Sidney. I am ſure, when I married Sir Robert, he had never heard me ſpeak twenty ſentences. Sir George agreed with her as to the propriety of her obſervation, in regard to a modeſt reſerve; but ſaid, people now-a-days did not carry their ideas of it quite ſo far as they did when his father's courtſhip began with her; and added, that a young lady might *ſpeak* with as much modeſty as ſhe could hold her tongue.

I did not interfere in the debate, only ſaid, I was very glad to have my mother's approbation of my conduct. This put an end to the argument, and my mother launched out into high encomiums on Mr. Faulkland. She ſaid, upon her *truth*, he was the fineſt young man ſhe ever ſaw, in every reſpect. So modeſt, ſo well bred, ſo very entertaining, and ſo unaſſuming, with all his fine ac-

com-

compliſhments: She was quite aſtoniſhed, and owned ſhe almoſt deſpaired of finding a young gentleman, of the preſent mode of education, ſo *very* unexceptionable in his behaviour. If his morals anſwered to his outward deportment,—there ſhe ſtopped; or rather Sir George interrupted her. I hope you'll believe, madam, that my knowledge of mankind is not ſo circumſcribed, but that I can diſtinguiſh between a real and an aſſumed character; and I will venture to aſſert, that, in the whole circle of my acquaintance, I do not know *one* ſo unobjectionable, even in your ſtrict ſenſe of the word *morals*, as Mr. Faulkland.

Well, ſaid my mother, I have the pleaſure to obſerve to you (and I think I am ſeldom miſtaken in my judgment) that Mr. Faulkland is at leaſt as well pleaſed with Sidney as we are with him.—What ſay you, daughter? Ay, what *ſay* you, ſiſter? cry'd Sir George,—I think, madam, that Mr. Faulkland is an accompliſhed gentleman, and—' and that ' you could be content to look no far-

' ther

'ther, if matters are brought to bear;
'eh, Sidney? (I need not tell you whoſe ſpeech this was.)—Brother, that is going a little too far, for the firſt time of my ſeeing him. A great *deal* too far, my mother ſaid; let us firſt know Mr. Faulkland's mind from himſelf, before we ſay a word more of the matter.

Sir George told us, that Mr. Faulkland, at going away, had requeſted he would ſup with him at his own houſe, as he ſaid he had a few viſits of form to pay, and ſhould be at home early in the evening.

May 24.——My mother and I were in bed before my brother came in laſt night, though he keeps very good hours in general. When we met this morning at breakfaſt, I ſaw by Sir George's face that he was brimful of ſomething.—Faulkland don't like you, Sidney, ſaid he, abruptly;—How can you or I help that, brother? cry'd I, colouring; tho', to tell you the truth, I did not believe him; for I knew, if it *had* been ſo, he would not have come out with it ſo bluntly. But my mother, who

who always takes every word ſhe hears literally, took him up very ſhort; 'If he 'does not, Sir, it is not polite in you to 'tell your ſiſter ſo; I hope Sidney may 'be *liked* by as good a man as Mr. Faulk-'land,' and up ſhe toſſed her dear honeſt head. Sir George burſt out a laughing. My mother looked angry; ſhe was afraid her ſagacity would be called in queſtion, after what ſhe had pronounced the evening before. I looked ſilly, but pretended to ſmile. Sir George was clown enough to laugh on; at laſt (to my mother) 'But, 'my dear madam, can you believe me 'ſerious in what I ſaid? have you ſo good 'an opinion of my veracity, or ſo ill a 'one of my breeding, as to ſuppoſe I 'would ſhock my ſiſter by ſuch a rude 'declaration, if I meant any thing by it 'but a joke?' Indeed, Sidney, (looking half ſmiling at me) I would not be as much in love with our ſovereign lady the queen, as poor Faulkland is with you, for my whole eſtate.

This put me a great deal more out of countenance than what he had ſaid at firſt.

firſt. Nay, brother, now you are too extravagant the other way.—My mother looked ſurprized, but recovered her good humour preſently.—Dear George, there is no knowing when you are in earneſt and when not: but, as Sidney ſays, now you are rather too extravagant. You might ſay ſo to Faulkland, anſwered my brother, if you were to hear him; I could get nothing from him the whole night but your praiſes. I thought, ſaid my pleaſed mother, he had not *diſliked* the girl.—Now you ſee, ſon, her *ſilence* did her no harm; and ſhe ſmiled tenderly at me. Come, ſaid Sir George, things are mighty well on all ſides. Faulkland has begged of me, that I would uſe my intereſt with you, mother (whom he thinks one of the beſt of women) that he may be permitted in form to make his addreſſes to Miſs Bidulph. *My* intereſt he knows he has, and I hope, madam, he will alſo have your approbation;—He deſired me to explain minutely to you every circumſtance of his fortune: what his eſtate is I have told you; and his family is of known diſtinc-

tion.

tion. He begged I would not *mention* Sidney's fortune; and ſaid, that if, upon a farther acquaintance, he ſhould have the happineſs to be acceptable to my ſiſter, he ſhould inſiſt upon leaving the appointment of her ſettlement to lady Bidulph and myſelf. I told him I would lay this propoſal before you, and could for his preſent comfort inform him, that, as I believed my ſiſter had no prepoſſeſſions in favour of any one elſe, I was ſure, if he met with your concurrence, her's would follow of courſe.

A very diſcrete anſwer, ſaid my mother; juſt ſuch a one as I would have dictated to you, if I had been at your elbow. I believe we may venture to ſuppoſe, that Sidney *has* no prepoſſeſſions; and as this is as handſome an offer as can poſſibly be made, I have no objections (if you have none, my dear) to admit Mr. Faulkland upon the terms he propoſes.

What anſwer ought I to have made, Cecilia? Why, to be ſure, juſt the one I *did* make.—I have *no* prepoſſeſſions, madam,

dam, looking down and bluſhing, till it actually painted me, for I was really ſtartled. My Cecilia knows I am not a prude.

My dear! cry'd my mother, and took me by the hand———

Poor Sidney, ſaid Sir George, how you are to be pitied! Mr. Faulkland propoſes waiting on you in the afternoon, if he is not *forbid*; and he looked ſo teazingly ſly, that my mother bid him leave off his *pranks*.

The day is over,—Mr. Faulkland ſpent the evening with us; no other company but our own family. My mother likes him better even than before—Thy *mother*—diſingenuous girl! why doſt thou not ſpeak thy own ſentiments? (There is an apoſtrophe for thy uſe, my Cecilia.) Well then, *my* ſentiments you ſhall have; you have an undoubted right to know them on all ſubjects, but particularly on this intereſting one.

I *do* think Mr. Faulkland the moſt amiable of men; and if my heart were (happily for me it is not) *very* ſuſceptible of

of tender impreſſions, I really believe I ſhould in time be abſolutely in love with him. This confeſſion will not ſatisfy you: may be it is not enough—yet, in truth, Cecilia, it is all that at preſent I can afford you.

The thoughts of the aukward figure I ſhould make in the evening viſit, ſat heavy on my ſpirits all day.—Can you conceive any thing more diſtreſſing than the ſituation of a poor girl, receiving the viſit of a man, who, for the firſt time, comes profeſſedly as her admirer? I had conceived a frightful idea of ſuch an interview, having formed my notions of it only from romances, where ſet ſpeeches of an ell long are made by the lover, and anſwers of a proportionable ſize are returned in form by the lady. But Mr. Faulkland ſoon delivered me from my anxiety. His eaſy, but incomparably polite and ſenſible freedom of addreſs, quickly made me loſe my ridiculous fears.—He made no other uſe of this viſit, than to recommend himſelf more ſtrongly to our eſteem, by ſuch means

as proved how well he deſerved it. If he was particular to me, either in his looks or manner, it was under the regulation of ſuch a nice decorum, that I (who ſuppoſed I muſt have ſunk with downright confuſion) was hardly diſconcerted during the whole viſit.

June 10.—I do really think my good mother grows ſo fond of Mr. Faulkland, that if he goes on at this rate, he will get the ſtart even of Sir George in her affections—'Mr. *Faulkland* ſaid ſo and ſo; 'Mr. *Faulkland* is of opinion; and I am 'ſure you will allow Mr. *Faulkland* to be 'a good judge of ſuch and ſuch things.'

To ſay the truth, the man improves upon you every hour you know him. And yet I have diſcovered in him ſome of thoſe little (and they are *but* little) alloys to his many good qualities, which Sir George at firſt told me of. The intereſt I may one day have in him makes me a cloſer obſerver than I ſhould otherwiſe be. There *is* that ſly turn to ridicule which my brother mentioned; yet, to do

him

him juſtice, he never employs it, but where it is deſerved; and then too with ſo much vivacity and good humour, that one cannot be angry with him.

We had a good deal of company at dinner with us to-day; amongſt the reſt, young Sayers, who is juſt returned from his travels, as *he* calls it. You remember he went away a good humoured, inoffenſive, quiet fool; he has brought no one ingredient of that character back with him, but the laſt; for ſuch a ſtiff, conceited, overbearing, talkative, impertinent coxcomb does not now exiſt. His mother, who, poor woman, you know originally made a ſimpleton of the boy, contributes now all in her power to finiſh the fop; and ſhe carries him about with her everywhere for a ſhew. We were aſſembled in the drawing-room before dinner: in *burſt* (for it was not a common entry) Maſter Sayers, and his mama, the cub handing in the old lady.—*So* ſtiff, and *ſo* aukward, and *ſo* ungraceful, and ſo *very* unlike Mr. Faulkland, that I pitied the poor thing, who thought that every body would

would admire him as much as his mother did. After he had been preſented to the ladies (for it was the firſt time we had ſeen him ſince he came home) he took a turn or two about the room, to exhibit his perſon: then, applying himſelf to a picture which hung over the door (a fine landſcape of Claude Lorrain, which Mr. Faulkland himſelf had brought over and given to Sir George) he aſked my brother, in a tone ſcarce articulate, whether we had any *painters* in England? My mother, who by chance heard him, and by greater chance underſtood him, anſwered, before Sir George had time, *Painters*, Sir! yes, ſure, and ſome very good ones too: why, you cannot have forgot *that*; it is not much above a year ſince you went abroad (for you muſt know he had been recalled upon the death of an uncle, who had left him his eſtate). I obſerved Mr. Faulkland conſtrained a very ſly laugh, on account both of the *manner* of my mother's taking his queſtion, and her innocently-undeſigned reprimand. Sayers pretended not to hear her, but looking through his fingers,

fingers, as if to throw the picture into perſpective, that is a pretty good piece, ſaid he, for a copy. Oh! cry'd his mother, there is no pleaſing *you*—people who have been *abroad* are ſuch connoiſſeurs in painting.—No body making any immediate anſwer, Mr. Faulkland ſtepped up to Mr. Sayers, and with ſuch a roguiſh humility in his countenance, that you would have ſworn he was a very ignoramus, ſaid, 'Are you of opinion, Sir, that that picture 'is nothing but a copy?' Nothing more, take my word for it, Sir: When *I* was at Rome, there was a Dutchman there, who made it his buſineſs to take copies *of* copies, which he diſperſed, and had people to ſell for him in different parts, at pretty good prices; and they did mighty well; for very few people *know* a picture; and I'll anſwer for it there are not many maſters of eminence, but what have a hundred originals palmed upon them more than ever they painted in their lives.

Mr. Faulkland then proceeded to aſk him abundance of queſtions, which any one, who did not know him well, would have

have thought he propoſed for no other end but a deſire of information: and the poor coxcomb Sayers plumed himſelf upon diſplaying ſo much travelled knowlege, to a wondering ignorant Engliſhman, who had never been out of his own country. The company were divided into little chatting parties, as is uſual when people are whiling away an half hour before dinner. Mrs. Sayers, my mother, and I, were ſitting together on a couch, near enough to hear the converſation that paſſed between the two gentlemen; at leaſt as much as was not ſunk in the affected, half-pronounced ſentences of Mr. Sayers. His mother, to whom he was the principal object of attention in the company, ſeemed mightily pleaſed at the opportunity her ſon had, from the inquiſitiveneſs of Mr. Faulkland (whom ſhe did not know) of ſhewing his taſte in the polite arts, and often looked about to obſerve if any body elſe attended to them. My mother, dear literal woman! (as I often call her to you) took every thing ſeriouſly, and whiſpered to me, how pretty that

is,

is, Sidney! how condeſcending in Mr. Faulkland! you ſee he does not make a parade of his *own* knowlege in theſe matters, but is pleaſed to reap the benefit of other people's. I, who ſaw the latent roguery, could hardly contain myſelf. Indeed I was amazed at Mr. Faulkland's grave inquiſitive face, and was very glad my mother did not find him out.

Sayers, elated with having ſhone ſo conſpicuouſly (for he obſerved that both my mother and I attended to his diſcourſe) proceeded to ſhew away with an immenſity of vanity and frothy chat, beginning every new piece of hiſtory with, 'When *I* was at Rome, or, when *I* was 'at Paris.'—At laſt, unluckily for him, ſpeaking of an incident (which made a good deal of noiſe, and happened at the firſt-mentioned place) in which two Engliſh gentlemen had been concerned, he ſaid it was about eleven months ago, juſt before he left Rome. My mother, who had heard Mr. Faulkland relate the ſame ſtory, but with ſome very different circumſtances, immediately ſaid, Mr. Faulkland,

land, have I not heard you ſpeak of that? You were at Rome yourſelf when the affair happened; and if I be not miſtaken, it was through your intereſt with the cardinal of —— that the buſineſs was made up.

If a ſpectre had appeared to poor Sayers, he could not have looked more aghaſt. He dropped his viſage half-way down his breaſt, and, for the *firſt* time, ſpeaking very *plain*, and very loud too, with a ſtare of aſtoniſhment, Have *you* been at *Rome*, Sir? I was there for a little time, Sir, anſwered Mr. Faulkland, with real modeſty; for he pitied the mortified buzzard; and I know the ſtory was *repreſented* as you have told it; the circumſtances differed in a few particulars, but the facts were nearly as you have related them.

How obligingly did he reconcile the out-of-countenance Sayers to himſelf and to the company? Were you long abroad, pray Sir? ſaid the coxcomb: About five years, Sir, anſwered Mr. Faulkland; but I perceive, by the converſation I have had the honour of holding with you to-day, that many accurate and

and curious obſervations eſcaped me, which you made in a much ſhorter ſpace of time; for the communication of which I think myſelf extremely obliged to you. Whether the poor ſoul thought him ſerious (as my mother did) I cannot tell; he made him a bow, however, for the compliment; but was ſo lowered, that he did not ſay a word more of Rome or Paris for the reſt of the day: and in this we had a double advantage; for as he had nothing elſe to talk of, his mouth was effectually ſtopped, except when Mr. Faulkland, out of compaſſion, aſked him (as he often did) ſuch queſtions as he thought he could anſwer, without expoſing his ignorance: for he was contented to have enjoyed it in their tête à tête, and was far from wiſhing the company to be witneſſes of it.

I think ſuch a bagatelle may give you ſome idea of this man's turn. I told it to Sir George; he laughed heartily, and ſaid it was *ſo* like him! My brother loves even his faults, though he will not allow me to call them by that name.

July 4.——You are unkind, Cecilia, and do not do juſtice to my ſincerity, when you ſay, *you are ſure I am in love with Mr. Faulkland.* If I were, can you conceive it poſſible that I would deny it to you? Ah! my ſiſter, muſt I ſuſpect *you* of wanting candour by your making a charge of diſingenuity againſt your friend? Indeed, Cecilia, if I *am* in love with him, I do not *yet* know it myſelf. I will repeat it to you, I think him the moſt amiable of men, and ſhould certainly give him the preference, if I were left to a free choice, over all the reſt of his ſex; at leaſt all that I have ever yet ſeen; though poſſibly there *may* be handſomer, wiſer, better men, but they have not fallen within my obſervation. I am not however ſo prepoſſeſſed in his favour, as to ſuppoſe him a phœnix; and if any unforeſeen event were to prevent my being his, I am ſure I ſhould bear it, and behave very handſomely.

And yet perhaps this may be only braging like a coward, becauſe I think a very ſhort time will put it out of the power

of

of fortune to divide us. Yet certain as the event of our marriage appears to me at preſent, I ſtill endeavour to keep a ſort of guard over my wiſhes, and will not give my heart leave to center all its happineſs in him; and therefore I cannot rank myſelf amongſt the firſt-rate lovers, who have neither eyes, nor ears, nor ſenſations, but for one object. This, Mr. Faulkland ſays, is his caſe, in regard to me. But I think we women ſhould not love at ſuch a rate, till duty makes the paſſion a virtue; and till *that* becomes my caſe, I am ſo much a philoſopher in love, that I am determined not to let it abſorb any of the other cordial affections, which I owe to my relations and my friends.

I think we ought always to form ſome laws to ourſelves for the regulation of our conduct: without this, what an impertinent dream muſt the life be of almoſt every young perſon of our ſex? You, my dear, though with an uncommon underſtanding of your own, have always been intirely conducted by your wiſe parents;

and in this I make it my boaſt to have followed your example. I have been accuſtomed from my infancy to pay an implicit obedience to the beſt of mothers; the conforming to this never yet coſt me an uneaſy minute, and I am ſure never will.

July 5.——A little incident happened to-day which pleaſed my mother wonderfully. She had been at morning prayers (as you know is her daily cuſtom;) when returning home in her chair, one of the men happened to ſlip his foot, and fell down juſt before Mr. Faulkland's houſe. He was ſo much hurt, that he could go no farther; and the footmen immediately opening the chair, told her ſhe had better ſtep into Mr. Faulkland's, till he called another, or got a man to aſſiſt in carrying her home. One of Mr. Faulkland's ſervants happened to be ſtanding at the door; ſo that, without any previous notice, ſhe was immediately conducted into a parlour, where Mr. Faulkland was ſitting at breakfaſt. She found with him two pretty

pretty little children at his knee, to one of whom he had given ſome cake; and the elder of the two, a boy of about five years old, he was gravely lecturing, though with great gentleneſs, for having told a lie. My mother aſked him, with ſome ſurprize, whoſe children thoſe were? He ſmiled, and told her they were his coachman's; and then ordered the footman to carry them down, bidding the little boy be ſure to remember what he had ſaid to him.

My mother inquired, if he permitted them to be in the houſe? He ſaid, he did; and that he had been induced to it from the diſtreſs he had ſeen their poor father in a few days before. He is an honeſt careful fellow, continued Mr. Faulkland, and has lived in my family from a boy. He was married to a good ſort of a body, who took great care of theſe children, and helped to maintain them decently by her work. The poor woman died in childbed laſt week; and the perſon who attended her in her illneſs (for ſhe had no ſervant) took that opportunity of robbing the lodgings;

and after plundering the poor creature of every thing that was worth carrying away, locked up thoſe two children, which you ſaw with me, and the new-born infant, with the corpſe of their mother.

The poor little wretches continued in that diſmal ſituation all night, having cried themſelves to ſleep, without being heard, though there were ſome other people in the houſe. The morning following I happened to make an early viſit in the neighbourhood of this diſtreſſed little family, and my coachman, who was a very affectionate huſband and father, took that opportunity of calling on his wife, whom he had not been able to ſee for three days. The cries of his children (now awake and almoſt ſtarved) obliged him haſtily to break open the door of the room, where the poor fellow was ſhocked with the diſmal ſpectacle of his wife's motionleſs corpſe in bed, the infant almoſt expiring at her ſide, and the other two poor little famiſhed creatures calling to their dead mother for bread.

The ſight almoſt deprived the man of his ſenſes. He ſnatched up his two eldeſt children

children in his arms, and ran raving to the houſe where I was, tearing his hair like a madman. He told me his mournful ſtory; with which I was ſo affected, that I ordered one of my footmen to carry the two children home to my houſe directly, and deſired their father to look out for ſome body to take care of the young one, which he ſoon did.

The honeſt poor fellow was delighted, when he came home to find his two children well and merry; for they were ſenſible of no want but their food. But his grief returned on him with great violence, at the thoughts of his being obliged to put them into the hands of people, who, he ſaid, he was ſure would not be ſo kind to them as their own poor mother had been; and my man told me he did nothing but kiſs them, and cry over them the whole day. To make his mind eaſy at once, I let him know they ſhould remain here under his own eye, till they were old enough to be put to ſchool; and accordingly directed my houſekeeper to ſee that they

were taken care of; which has made their father very happy.

The little rogues have found their way up to me, and I love ſometimes to hear them prattle; but this morning the eldeſt having told me a lie of his brother, I was checking him for it when you came in.

My mother was ſo pleaſed with Mr. Faulkland's conduct in this little hiſtory, that ſhe repeated it to me word for word as ſoon as ſhe came home, and concluded with obſerving how *good* a *creature* Mr. Faulkland muſt be, who in ſo tender a manner intereſted himſelf in his poor ſervant's misfortune. Moſt young gentlemen, ſaid ſhe, would have thought they had done enough in giving the ſervant money to have provided for his children as well as he could: it is in ſuch trifles as theſe that we often diſcover the excellence of the heart.

You will ſuppoſe, my dear, that I am not diſpleaſed at any circumſtance that can raiſe Mr. Faulkland's character in my pious mother's eſteem. I heard the ſtory with

with great pleaſure; but not making any comments on it, Sir George (who was preſent at the relation) ſaid, Well, Sidney, you are either very affected, or the greateſt ſtoic in the world; why, any other girl would be in raptures at ſuch a proof of the honeſt tenderneſs of that heart which ſhe knows ſhe poſſeſſes intirely, and on which the whole of her future happineſs depends. I am very ſenſible of Mr. Faulkland's worth, brother, I replied, and I can feel without being tranſported. I will be hanged, ſaid Sir George, if I think you love Faulkland, at leaſt not half ſo well as he deſerves; and I dare ſwear you have not been honeſt enough to tell him yet whether you do or not. It is time enough for that, I replied; if Mr. Faulkland and I ſhould be married, I hope I ſhall give him no cauſe to complain of my want of affection.

If you ſhould be married! ſaid my brother; I know of no poſſible *ifs*, unleſs they are of your own making. I know of none neither, anſwered my mother; yet I think Sidney is in the right to be doubtful about

all human events. Many things, added ſhe gravely (for ſhe has a great veneration for old ſayings) fall out between the cup and the lip.

I think, mother, ſaid Sir George, bluntly, *you* were diſappointed in your *firſt* love; I have heard you ſpeak of it, but I forget the circumſtances. As I had never heard my mother make any mention of this particular, I begged ſhe would oblige me with relating it.

When I was about one-and-twenty, daughter, ſaid ſhe, a match was concluded by my father between me and a very fine gentleman. I loved him, and (as I ſuppoſe all young women do in the like circumſtances) believed myſelf equally beloved by him. The courtſhip had been of a year's ſtanding; for you muſt know I was not very eaſily won. Every thing was ſettled, and the day appointed for our marriage arrived; when, inſtead of the bridegroom, whom we every minute expected, there came a letter from him directed to me. The contents were, that having formerly been engaged to a young lady

lady by the moſt ſolemn vows, he had, unfortunately for them both, forgot them all on ſeeing me, and had broke through every obligation divine and human to obtain me. He intreated mine, and my family's pardon, in the moſt pathetic manner, for having engaged our eſteem ſo far as to conſent to an union, of which he found himſelf unworthy, and which it was impoſſible for him to accompliſh; for, ſaid he, the wrongs I have done the woman, whoſe youth I ſeduced, riſe to my imagination with ſo much horror, that, for the empire of the world, I would not complete my guilt, by devoting that hand to another, to which ſhe only has a right. He enlarged greatly on the ſufferings of his heart, in the ſtruggle between his love for me, and his duty to the perſon who had his firſt vows; and whom, he declared, his infidelity had almoſt brought to the grave. He claimed my pity, both on his own and her account: and repeatedly intreated my forgiveneſs of his fault.

The

The whole letter, which was very long, was ſo expreſſive of a mind overwhelmed with deſpair, that I was exceedingly ſhocked at the reading of it. What could I ſay? The plea he offered for his ſeemingly ſtrange conduct, was too juſt to admit of any objections. I own the diſappointment afflicted me, but I bore it with a becoming reſolution. My family were at firſt exceedingly exaſperated againſt my doubly unfaithful lover; but, upon inquiring into the facts, they found the truth to be as he had repreſented it. The concluſion was, that, upon the very day on which he was to have been married to me, and on which he had writ me that gloomy letter, he was ſeized with a melancholy, which encreaſing on him daily, ſoon after ended in abſolute madneſs, and he was confined for the remainder of his life. The young lady lived but a ſhort time after the melancholy fate of her lover, and died, as it was ſaid, of a broken heart.

It was a great comfort to me to reflect, that my fate diſpoſed otherwiſe of me than

than to this unhappy gentleman; for I am very ſure, had theſe fatal events happened in conſequence of my marriage with him, that I ſhould never have ſurvived it.

This extraordinary anecdote of my mother's life, which I had never had a hint of before (for ſhe could not ſpeak of it without great emotion) very much affected me. Sir George ſaid, the ſtory was more tragical than he had apprehended, and told my mother, *that* was an accident which fell out between the cup and the lip with a vengeance.

My mother continued thoughtful for a good while; and I was ſorry that the memory of this melancholy ſtory had been revived; but Sir George talked and laughed us both into ſpirits again.

July 6.——This Mr. Faulkland is a princely man; he has ſent me *ſuch* a ſet of jewels! My mother ſays they are too fine for a private gentlewoman; but George tells her they are not a bit too fine for Mr. Faulkland's *wife*, and only ſuitable

to

to his fortune. You know I have but few of my own, theſe only which were my mother's when ſhe was a maiden. The greateſt part of her's, and by much the fineſt, were preſented to her by my father; but thoſe ſhe reſerves for Sir George, againſt the time of his marriage, as a preſent for his lady; for they are family jewels.

July 8.——My probation is over, my Cecilia.—The formidable queſtion has been put to me, and I have anſwered it—Ay marry, ſay you, but how? In the *negative*, to be ſure, my dear—No, no, my Cecilia; a valuable (pſha! what an affected cold word that is) a lovely and moſt worthy man, with ſix thouſand pounds a year, is a prize that a country girl muſt not expect to draw every day. Mr. Faulkland, in *lover-like* phraſe, demanded from me the time of his deſtined happineſs: I referred him to my mother. She, good and delicate as ſhe is, referred him to Sir George. George blurted out ſome ſudden day that ſtartled us both, when

Mr.

Mr. Faulkland reported it to us. I ſtammered out ſomething; my mother heſitated; Sir George came in, and blundered at us all; ſo I think we compounded for the time, and amongſt us fixed upon this day month—And full ſoon enough, ſays my Cecilia: you have known the man but about ſix weeks, and ſurely a month is as little time as you can take in preparing fineries. True, my girl, true; but it is all George's doings. Indeed, my Cecilia, without affectation, I had much rather have had a longer day; though I think I *know* the man as well in thoſe ſix weeks, as if I had been acquainted with him ſo many years; for he has ſpent moſt of his hours with us every day during that time; and my mother ſays, he is one of thoſe in *whom there is no guile.*

Sir George is downright inſolent; he declares I am not ſenſible of my own happineſs, and that I deſerve to be married to ſome little petty Wiltſhire 'ſquire. He ſo piques himſelf upon making this match, there is no bearing him. He has taken all matters of ſettlement upon himſelf, and

and inſiſts on my mother's not interpoſing. She acquieſces, but charges my brother not to let Mr. Faulkland's generoſity carry him too far, and bids him remember what is due to his friend, as well as to his ſiſter.

July 10.——I really begin to be hurried. My mother, you know, is exactly punctilious in every thing. Such a quantity of things *are* bought, and ſuch a quantity to *be* bought, that there is no end of journeys into the city. Then milleners and mantua-makers! One would think I was going to paſs the remainder of my life in a remote country, where there were no kind of manufacturers or artificers to be come at; and that I was to provide cloathing for half a century.

July 12.——I have much upon my hands, and Sir George is ſo impatient and troubleſome, that I believe I muſt employ a ſecretary, to give you a minute detail of all our foppery; for I ſhall not have patience to do it myſelf.

July

July 13.——Sir George has often told me, that he knows of no fault Mr. Faulkland has, but a violence of temper when provoked. I ſaw an inſtance of it to-day, which I was ſorry for, and the more ſo, as I was in ſome meaſure acceſſary to it. Mr. Faulkland, my brother, a lady of our acquaintance, and myſelf took a ride in Hyde-Park this morning. We were to dine at Kenſington (where my mother was to meet us) at the houſe of the lady (a relation of Mr. Faulkland's) who was with us.

We rode into the ſtable-yard of her houſe, in order to alight. My horſe, which happened to be a young one that Sir George had newly bought, ſaw ſome object that made him ſhy of advancing, and he turned ſuddenly about. A footman of Mr. Faulkland's, who chanced to ſtand juſt behind me, very imprudently, though I am ſure without deſign of harm, gave him a ſtroke with his whip, which made the animal plunge and throw me, as I had not time to recover my ſeat from the firſt ſhort turn he made.

I luckily

I luckily received not the leaſt hurt, and was on my feet in an inſtant. But Mr. Faulkland, who had leaped off his horſe even before I fell, was ſo enraged at the fellow, that he gave him two or three ſound laſhes with his whip acroſs the ſhoulders, which fell on him as quick as lightning. I am inclined to think the ſervant was not ſober; for he had the inſolence to lay hold of his maſter's whip, and muttered an oath or two. Mr. Faulkland's attention being quickly turned to me, he took no farther notice of the man. We went into the houſe; and after I had aſſured them all I was not in the leaſt hurt, I begged of Mr. Faulkland to forgive the footman, who had undeſignedly cauſed the accident. He made a thouſand apologies for having let his anger ſo far tranſport him, as to chaſtiſe his ſervant in a manner he was not uſed to do; but the peril he put you into, madam, addreſſing himſelf to me, made me forget myſelf. I repeated, I hope, Sir, you have forgiven him. I wiſh, my dear Miſs Bidulph, ſaid he, that the fellow were guilty

guilty of no other fault but this, that I might ſhew you my readineſs to obey you; but he is ſuch an intolerable ſot, that there is no keeping him with ſafety. I have forgiven him ſeveral idle things; but as I had determined to part with him before this happened, I hope you will be ſo good as not to inſiſt on my retaining him. I could not intercede for the fooliſh fellow after this; ſo ſaid no more.

This little incident convinces me that Mr. Faulkland is of too warm a temper; yet I am not alarmed at the diſcovery; you know I am the very reverſe; and I hope in time, by gentle methods, in ſome meaſure to ſubdue it in Mr. Faulkland. His own good ſenſe and good nature muſt incline him to wiſh it corrected. My brother ſays, he has often lamented this vice of his nature to him, and ſaid he had taken infinite pains to get the better of it; and had ſo far ſucceeded, that he ſeldom was ſurprized by it, but on very ſudden and extraordinary occaſions; ſuch as, I ſuppoſe, he looked upon this to be, which I have related.

We

We paſſed the day delightfully at Kenſington, and did not return to town till late. I think I have got cold, as we walked a long time in the garden.

July 14.——I have got an ugly ſore throat: my mother inſiſts on my being let blood; I am afraid of alarming her by complaining, though I had very little reſt all night, Mr. Faulkland came early this morning to enquire after my health: my mother told him I was not well. How tenderly dejected were his looks, when I came into the room. Sir George made him ſtay to breakfaſt; he ſcarce taſted any thing; he was quite caſt down. My brother rallied him (I thought it unſeaſonable) on the chance he had the day before of loſing his wife. Mr. Faulkland anſwered, I wiſh I had followed the firſt motion of my thoughts, and diſcharged that wicked fellow a month ago. Sir George ſaid, as it happened, there had been no harm done; but he thought Mr. Faulkland would do well to diſmiſs ſuch an inſolent rogue from his ſervice. He has

has ſaved me that trouble, ſaid Mr. Faulkland, he has diſmiſſed himſelf; but took care firſt to rob me. To rob you! we all repeated in the ſame breath. Yes, ſaid Mr. Faulkland: I told him, after I got home, that he was to deliver up ſuch things as he had in his charge to my own man, as I meant to diſcharge him in the morning. He made me no reply, for he was a ſullen fellow; but when the family were aſleep, he contrived to pick the lock of a bureau in my dreſſing-room, where I ſometimes keep money. I believe what induced him to it was, his having ſeen me yeſterday morning, when I was going to ride (a precaution which I generally uſe) put my pocket-book into this place, and I ſuppoſe he concluded there were bank notes in it, for he took *that* (I preſume without ſtaying to examine it) and all the money he could find beſides, and very cleverly made his eſcape out of a back window, which was found open this morning.

My mother lectured Mr. Faulkland a little, for ſuffering a ſervant, whoſe fidelity he was not ſure of, to ſee where he depoſited

depoſited his money; which, ſhe ſaid, might prove a temptation to one, who was not ſo ill inclined as this man. Mr. Faulkland acknowledged it was careleſs in him; but ſaid, in his juſtification, he had been accuſtomed to very honeſt people about him, which rendered him leſs ſuſpicious.

He appeared ſo anxious and unhappy about my indiſpoſition, that I affected to make as light of it as poſſible; though indeed I find myſelf very much out of order. With what a kind ſorrow did he obſerve my looks; ſighs now-and-then ſtole from him, as his eyes were fixed on my face. I am obliged to him, yet I think I ſhould be as much concerned for *him*, if he were ill.

Here is a whole cargo of ſilks and laces juſt ſent in to me—Heigh-ho! I can't look at them—I am not well—and I have ſuch a gauntlope to run of viſiting and racketting that the thought makes me ſicker.

July 27.—After a fortnight's, a dreadful fortnight's intermiſſion, I reaſſume my

my pen. I have often told you, Cecilia, I was not born to be happy. Oh! I propheſied when I ſaid ſo, though I knew not why I ſaid it.

I will try to recollect all the circumſtances of this miſerable interval, and relate them as well as I can. The laſt line in my journal (which I have not yet ventured to ſend you, as your ſtay at Paris is ſo uncertain) informs you that I was ill. I was let blood; but my diſorder increaſed, and I was in a high fever before next morning. I remember what my reflections were, and am ſure my apprehenſions of death were not on my *own* account afflicting, but grievouſly ſo at the thoughts of what thoſe ſhould feel whom I was to leave behind.

My mother and Mr. Faulkland, I believe, chiefly engaged my mind: but I did not long continue capable of reflection. The violence of my diſorder deprived me of my ſenſes on the fourth day, and they tell me I raved of Mr. Faulkland. I remember nothing, but that, in my intervals of reaſon, I always ſaw my poor mother in tears

tears by my bedſide. I was in the utmoſt danger, but it pleaſed God to reſtore me to the ardent prayers of my dear parent. In about ten days I began to ſhew ſome ſymptoms of amendment, and inquired how Mr. Faulkland did. My mother anſwered, he is well, my dear, and gone out of town, but I believe will return in a day or two. Gone out of town, ſaid I, and leave me dying! Indeed that was not kind of Mr. Faulkland, and I ſhall tell him ſo. My mother was ſitting on the bedſide, and had hold of my hand; my brother was ſtanding with his back to the fire-place. I obſerved they looked at one another, but neither made me any anſwer. Pray, Sir George, I cried, would you ſerve the woman ſo whom you were ſo near making your wife? My brother was going to reply, but my mother frowned at him; he looked diſpleaſed, and went out of the room. Dear madam, ſaid I, there is ſomething the matter with Mr. Faulkland; don't keep me in ſuſpence. I *know* there is ſomething, which you and my brother would conceal from me.

me. Is Mr. Faulkland ſick? Not that I know of, I aſſure you, anſwered my mother; he was well yeſterday, for we had a meſſage from him to enquire after your health, as we have had every day, for he is but at Richmond; and you know, if he were in town, he could receive no other ſatisfaction than hearing from you, as you are too ill to admit of any viſits. My mother rang the bell immediately, and aſked me to take ſomething; I ſaw ſhe wanted to turn the converſation. My maid Ellen came into the room, and I aſked no more queſtions.

My mother ſtaid with me till it was time for her to go to reſt: but avoided mentioning Mr. Faulkland's name, or giving me any opportunity of doing it; for ſhe tenderly conjured me to keep myſelf quite compoſed, and not to talk. The doctor aſſured her this night that he thought me out of danger; and ſhe retired with looks of cordial delight.

She was no ſooner gone, than I called Ellen to my bedſide, and charged her to tell me all ſhe knew concerning Mr.

Faulkland. The poor girl looked concerned, and ſeemed to ſtudy for an anſwer. Lord bleſs me, madam! what ſhould I know of him more than my lady has told you? When did you ſee him? ſaid I: Not for ſeveral days, ſhe anſwered. Where is he? At Richmond, I heard Sir George ſay; but I ſuppoſe he will come to town as ſoon as he hears you are well enough to receive him. I catched hold of her hand; 'Ellen, I know there is 'ſomething, relative to Mr. Faulkland, 'which you all want to hide from me; 'don't attempt to deceive me; you may 'be ſure, whatever it be, I muſt ſoon 'be informed of it; in the mean while, 'my doubts make me very unhappy.'

The good-natured girl's trouble and confuſion increaſed as I ſpoke; My dear madam, ſhe replied, when you are better, my lady will tell you all: 'No, no, Ellen, 'I muſt know it now; tell it me this mi-'nute, or you muſt never expect to ſee 'me better under ſuch uncertainty. What 'is the *all*, the frightful *all*, that I am to 'be told? How you have ſhocked me 'with

'with that little word!' I know nothing, madam, anſwered Ellen, but what I gathered from Sir George's loud angry talk with my lady; and I ſhould be undone if her ladyſhip were to know I mentioned it to you. I aſſured her my mother ſhould not know it. Why then, madam (ſpeaking lower) I am afraid that Mr. Faulkland has miſbehaved, or has been belied to my lady—She ſtopped at this—How? how? cry'd I eagerly; what has ſhe heard of him? Something of another courtſhip, ſhe replied; but I hope it is all falſe—You trifle with me—ſpeak out, and ſay all you know. The poor creature ſtarted at my impatience: 'I know no more, madam, 'than that I heard my lady ſay to Sir 'George, I had rather Sidney were in her 'grave than married to him. Sir George 'ſaid, But why will you not let Mr. 'Faulkland juſtify himſelf, madam? Juſ-'tify himſelf! my lady anſwered; what 'can he ſay? Is it not plain that he is 'falſe to another woman? They talked 'lower; but at laſt Sir George raiſed his 'voice, and ſaid, he would give half his

'eſtate to have the villain puniſhed;—
'All this, madam, I over-heard by mere
'accident. Sir George was going abroad;
'his linen was lying ready for him in his
'dreſſing-room; and his man deſired me
'to put a ſtitch in one of his maſter's
'point ruffles, which was a little ripped
'in the gathering. I had come up the
'back ſtairs into the dreſſing-room, juſt
'as my lady (who was with Sir George
'in the bed-chamber) ſaid the words I
'firſt repeated; and while I ſtood doing
'the ruffle, I heard the reſt. There was
'a great deal more ſaid, but I could not
'diſtinguiſh any thing beſides, except a
'word here and there, which Sir George
'ſeemed to ſpeak in a very angry tone.
'This was the ſecond day of your illneſs.
'Mr. Faulkland had been here in the
'morning to inquire how you did; my
'lady ſaw him, and I thought they parted
'very friendly. I met Mr. Faulkland
'coming down ſtairs; he looked full of
'grief; my lady ſtood at the dining-
'room door and wiſhed him a good
'morning. About an hour after came

'a letter

'a letter directed to you; it was brought 'by a porter, who ſaid it required no 'anſwer. As you were too ill to read 'it, I gave it to my lady; and it was 'ſoon after this, that I heard the con-'verſation between Sir George and her 'ladyſhip. Mr. Faulkland came again 'in the evening. Sir George was not 'at home; but my lady had him above 'an hour in the drawing-room; and 'the footman, who let him out, ſaid, 'he looked as if he were in ſad trouble. 'He has never been here ſince, but ſends 'conſtantly every day to know how you 'do. My lady ordered me, if any let-'ters came for you, to deliver them to 'her.' 'And has there any come to me?' 'No, madam, word was always ſent to 'Mr. Faulkland of your being ſo ill, 'that to be ſure he thought it would be 'in vain for him to write to you.'

This was all I could gather from the maid. What a night did I paſs! I ſcarce cloſed my eyes. Ellen lay in a field-bed by me; ſhe had watched ſeveral nights, and I obliged her now to undreſs and go

into bed. She ſlept ſoundly; how I envied her tranquillity! If I forgot myſelf for a few minutes, my ſlumbers were diſtracted, and I ſtarted at the recollection of what I had already heard, and the dread of what I had *ſtill* to hear. Mr. Faulkland abſenting himſelf from the houſe ſo long; my mother wiſhing me in the grave, rather than be his wife; my brother denouncing vengeance on the *villain!* Theſe were the terrible ideas that haunted me till morning. What can he have done? I cried aloud ſeveral times. I ſummoned to my aid all the fortitude I was miſtreſs of, and reſolved not to ſink under the calamity, be it of what nature it would.

My mother, ever kind and tender, came early the next morning into my room. She inquired after my health, and looked as if ſhe *pitied* me. I was ready to cry at her compaſſionate glances; they mortified me, but I was determined not to let her perceive it. I told her I was much better; and, what is ſurprizing, I was really ſo, notwithſtanding the uneaſy ſtate of my mind. She talked of indifferent

ferent things, and ſaid, ſhe hoped I ſhould ſoon be able to go into the country for a few days, to recover a little ſtrength. I anſwered, I hope ſo too, madam. We were both ſilent for a while; my mother had her indulgent eyes fixed upon me; mine were caſt down: at laſt I reſolved to ſpeak out. Madam, ſaid I, looking ſtedfaſtly at her, what is the cauſe of your coldneſs towards Mr. Faulkland? 'Tis in vain for you to hide it longer; you ſay he is *well*, and gone out of town. If he has ſhewn any ſlight towards me, tell me ſo at once; and do not entertain ſo mean an opinion of your daughter, as to ſuppoſe ſhe cannot bear the news. Your tenderneſs, I ſee, would conceal *ſomething* from me; but believe me, madam, I am prepared for the worſt.

My dear, replied my mother, it gives me great pleaſure to hear you ſay ſo. I pray God preſerve my child, and grant her a better lot than ſhe could hope for in a union with Mr. Faulkland. What has he done, madam? My deareſt Sidney, ſhe anſwered, this is the firſt trial you have

ever had of your patience; but I have no doubt that your goodneſs and diſcretion will teach you to act as becomes your character.

I did not intend to have ſpoken to you on the ſubject, till you were better able to bear the knowlege of what I am going to acquaint you with; but your prudence, I think, makes you equal to every thing; and I hope your health will not be endangered by the diſcovery of Mr. Faulkland's baſeneſs. (What a dreadful preface!)

The day after you were taken ill, a letter, directed to you, was brought hither by a porter, which your maid (very diſcretely) delivered to me. As you were not in a condition to read it yourſelf, I thought proper to open it. The cover contained a few lines addreſſed to you; and in it was incloſed a letter directed to Mr. Faulkland. Good God, added ſhe, taking the papers out of her pocket, how little reliance ought we to have on a fair outſide!

Here

Here are the letters; read what is in the cover firſt. I did ſo; it was ill writ, and worſe ſpelt. Theſe were the contents.

Madam,

I hear you are ſoon to be married to Mr. Faulkland; but as I think it is great pity that ſo virtuous a young lady ſhould be thrown away, this is to inform you, that he does not deſerve you.

The incloſed letter, wrote to him by a fine and beautiful young lady that he decoyed, ſhews you how falſe he is. When you tax him with it, he will know from whence you got your information; but let him deny it if he can.

I am, madam,

Your unknown friend,

and humble ſervant.

The letter to Mr. Faulkland, in a very pretty female hand, and the date but a week old (from the time it was ſent to me) was as follows:

'Oh! Mr. Faulkland, I am the moſt unfortunate woman in the world! Fatal have you been to me, and I am undone for ever.—I was in hopes that our mutual fault might have been concealed; for, while we ſtaid at Bath, I kept my aunt intirely ignorant of what paſſed between us, though ſhe often preſſed me to confeſs the truth; but it can now no longer be concealed. I am but too ſenſibly reminded of the unhappy conſequences of my own weakneſs, and your ungoverned (would I could call it) love. I never meant to trouble you with complaints; but my preſent condition calls loudly for your compaſſion. Are you then really going to be married? There wants but this to complete my deſtruction! Oh! Sir, before it is too late, take pity on me! I dare not continue in the houſe with my uncle much longer. My aunt ſays, that, when my affliction becomes ſo conſpicuous as not to be any longer hid, ſhe will form a pretence, on account of my health, for me to be abſent for ſome months, under

der colour of going to Bath, or to London, for better advice than I can have here. But what will this avail me? I have no relations, no friends, nor acquaintance, that I can truſt with the ſecret of my miſerable ſituation. To whom then can I fly, but to you, the cauſe of all my ſorrow? I beſeech you, for heaven's ſake, write to me, and tell me, if indeed you are going to give yourſelf away for ever! If you are, your intended bride, perhaps may have no other advantage of me, but what you in an evil hour deprived me of. Write to me, dear, though cruel, as you are; and think of ſome place of refuge for your unhappy

'A. B.'

When I had read theſe letters, my mother aſked me, what I thought of Mr. Faulkland? Indeed, I was ſo aſtoniſhed, that I ſcarce knew what anſwer to make; but replied, Madam, are you ſatisfied that this letter is not forged, with a deſign to injure Mr. Faulkland? Ah! my dear, ſaid ſhe, I am ſorry you ſtrive to catch at

ſo

ſo ſlender a twig; you may be ſure I am but too well convinced that the letter is genuine, or you ſhould never have had a moment's uneaſineſs by the knowlege of it. Mr. Faulkland himſelf does not deny it, and it is with his permiſſion that I kept it. I promiſed to return it, but deſired leave to retain it for a few days. He could not refuſe me this, though he might eaſily imagine I deſigned to ſhew it to you. That, indeed, was my intention, when I deſired to keep it a little while in my hands, and I did ſo, that I might have your judgment on the letter itſelf, as well as fully to juſtify my own proceedings in what I have done. Ah! dear madam, cry'd I, ſcarce knowing what I ſaid, I rely on your maternal goodneſs; I am ſure you have done what is proper. Yet has Mr. Faulkland nothing to ſay for himſelf?———But I will aſk no more queſtions—I know too much already—My love, ſaid my mother, you have a right to know every thing relative to this affair.

I ſhewed the letters to your brother, as ſoon

ſoon as I received them. Sir George at firſt ſeemed quite confounded, but afterwards, to my very great ſurprize, he ſmiled and ſaid, he knew of that fooliſh buſineſs before. I aſked him if he knew of it before, how he could anſwer it to his honour, his conſcience, or the love he ought to bear his ſiſter, not to divulge it immediately? Why, ſaid he, I aſſure you it is a trivial affair, that ought not to make you uneaſy.

What, George! anſwered I, a trivial matter for a man to ruin a fine young lady, forſake her, and dare to involve an innocent creature in his crimes! Do you call this a *trivial* affair? If you knew the circumſtances, ſaid he, you would not view it in ſo diſadvantageous a light. Faulkland certainly gained the affections of a young lady, though without ſeeking to do ſo; he never courted her, never attempted to pleaſe her, much leſs to win her heart, and leaſt of all to ruin her virtue. I know that is an action he is not capable of committing. How comes it to paſs then that he *did* ſo, ſaid I, interrupting

rupting him? Why, the girl was ſilly, and ſhe was thrown in his way by a vile deſigning woman that had the care of her. 'And was he (again ſtopping him) to 'take advantage of her folly, and join 'with that *vile deſigning* woman, to de-'ſtroy a poor young creature's honour?' The *beſt* men, ſaid he confidently, may fall into an error; and if you expect to find a man intirely free from them, you look for what is not poſſible in human nature.

I may expect to find a man without flagrant crimes to anſwer for, I hope; and I believe I ſpoke it with warmth. Do you call *this* one, madam? ſaid he, with ſtill more aſſurance: I hope Sidney will not be ſuch a chit as to think in this manner, when ſhe comes to hear the affair explained. I really grew down-right angry, and could not forbear ſaying, I would rather ſee you married to your grave than to ſuch a man. Your brother then begged I would hear Mr. Faulkland juſtified, and be a little cool till that was done. I told him there was a terrible

laſt

fact alledged, of which I could not conceive it poſſible for him to acquit himſelf.

George ſaid, he had a letter to ſhew me on the ſubject, which he had received from Mr. Faulkland while he was at Bath, and which he was ſure would convince me, that the whole affair was ſo trifling, it ought by no means to be objected to Mr. Faulkland, nor, in his opinion, even mentioned to him.

I told him, I was ſorry to find that he and I thought ſo differently; for that I was determined to ſpeak to Mr. Faulkland immediately about it, and, if he could not ſatisfy me intirely on the ſcore of the injured lady, that he muſt never think of Sidney more.

Your brother ſaid, that the letter which was ſent to you had come from the revengeful dog who had robbed his maſter, and that he would give half his eſtate to have the villain puniſhed as he deſerved. Mr. Faulkland, it ſeems, had told him this himſelf. The fellow found it in the pocket-book which he had taken out of the eſcrutore, and his diſappointment, per-

perhaps, at not getting a better booty (for he found but twenty moidores beſides) joined to his malice againſt his maſter, incited him to make the uſe he did of this letter. Now, continued my mother, though the fellow is undoubtedly a vile creature, yet, my dear, I think *we* are obliged to him for this diſcovery, providentially as it has come, to ſave you from what, in my opinion, would be the worſt of misfortunes.

The loſs of this letter had alarmed Mr. Faulkland ſo much, that he put an advertiſement into the papers next day, worded in ſo particular a manner, as ſhewed how very fearful he was of that letter's coming to light; for, no doubt, he ſuſpected the man might make a dangerous uſe of it. The advertiſement ſaid, that if the ſervant, who had abſconded from his maſter's houſe in St. James's Square the night before, would reſtore the papers which he took with him, they ſhould be received without any queſtions being aſked, and a reward of twenty guineas paid to any perſon who ſhould bring them back.

back. This advertiſement, which, to be ſure, the fellow either did not ſee at all, or had not time enough to avail himſelf of it, ſhews you to what ſad reſources people are driven, who, having done unwarrantable actions, are often in the power of the loweſt wretches. I own this circumſtance gave me a very ill impreſſion of Mr. Faulkland. Your brother ſays, he remembers this man was one of the ſervants he took with him to Bath, and, without doubt, he knew of his amour. The advertiſement has ſince been changed, by Sir George's advice. I find the man is named, his perſon deſcribed, and a reward of fifty pounds offered for the apprehending him; but I take it for granted he has got out of reach.

Though this little digreſſion was very pertinent, I was impatient to know what had paſſed between my mother and Mr. Faulkland on the fatal ſubject, and could not forbear aſking her.

I ſhall tell you, ſaid ſhe, in order. Your brother and I had ſome farther altercations; and indeed, my dear, it amazes

me

me to find, that a young man, educated as Sir George was, in the early part of life, in the ſtricteſt principles of virtue, and the ſon of parents, who, thank God, always gave him the beſt example, ſhould have ſo far deviated from the ſober paths he was brought up in, as to treat the moſt glaring vices with a levity that ſhocked me. But, I ſuppoſe, the company he kept abroad, among whom this hypocrite Faulkland was his chief, has quite perverted him. He gave me the letter to read, which he had received from his friend whilſt he was at Bath; and which, he ſaid, was to convince me that it was ſuch a *trifling* affair, that we ought not to take the leaſt notice of it. And all his reaſon for this was, truly, becauſe that looſe man treats the ſubject as lightly as he does. I am afraid Sir George is no better than himſelf, or he would not have ventured to make him the confident of his wild amours; and that at a time too when he was encouraged to addreſs you. He tells him of a very pretty young lady (innocent he ſays too) that he got acquainted

quainted with, who came to Bath under the care of an aunt and uncle; he talks ſome idle ſtuff of avoiding her, when he found ſhe liked him, and that the aunt (wicked woman!) contrived to leave them together one evening, when, I underſtand, the poor young creature fell into the ſnare that was prepared for her. For, would you believe it, my dear, the monſtrous libertine, notwithſtanding his pretences, owned that he had paid a price for the girl to her aunt. The betrayed creature herſelf knew not of this.

I own I had not patience to read the letter through. To ſay the truth, I but run my eye in a curſory manner over it; I was afraid of meeting, at every line, ſomething offenſive to decency. And *this* was the account, which, in your brother's opinion, was intirely to exculpate Mr. Faulkland. I think I never was ſo angry. I threw the letter to George with indignation, telling him, I was aſhamed to find, that he, after knowing an incident of this kind, had ſo little regard to the honour of his ſiſter, as to promote a marriage be-

tween

tween her and ſuch a rake. He anſwered, if I kept you unmarried till I found ſuch a man as *I* ſhould *not* call a rake, you were likely to live and die a maid. That for his part, he was very ſorry, as well for Mr. Faulkland's ſake as yours, he had ever propoſed an union, which he found was likely to be overthrown by unſeaſonable ſcruples. And the gentleman, in a violent paſſion, flung out of the room, without deigning even to take up the letter, which had fallen on the floor.

I preſume he went directly to his friend Faulkland, and told him all that had paſſed; for the plauſible man came to me in the evening, and with looks, full of pretended ſorrow, but *real* guilt, begged I would hear him on the ſubject of a letter which, he ſaid, he found had unfortunately prejudiced me againſt him. To be ſure he was prepared, and had, with George's help, contrived an artful ſtory to impoſe on me. He took me unawares; but I was reſolved not to give him the advantage of arguments, but proceed to aſk him a few plain queſtions. I therefore cut him

him ſhort at once, by ſaying, Mr. Faulkland, I am extremely concerned and ſhocked at what has happened; I will ſay but a few words to you; and deſire to hear nothing more than anſwers to my queſtions: he bowed, and remained ſilent.

I then aſked him, taking the young lady's letter out of my pocket, whether that was from the ſame perſon, of whom he had written an account to my ſon whilſt he was at Bath? He anſwered, It is, madam; and I hoped from that letter, which I find Sir George has ſhewn you, you would be induced to believe that I never formed a thought of injuring that young lady, till ſome unfortunate circumſtances combined, and ſuddenly ſurpriſed me into the commiſſion of a fault that has made us both unhappy. Sir, ſaid I, I don't pretend to know people's hearts, I can only judge of them from their actions. You acknowledge that ſhe was a fine young woman, and you believe innocent: What excuſe can you offer for being her deſtroyer? Dear madam, don't

uſe

uſe ſo ſevere an expreſſion——Sir, I can uſe no other: How can you extenuate the fault, by which you merit ſo ſevere an appellation? To a lady of your rigid delicacy, madam, ſaid he, perhaps what youth could offer, in extenuation of the fault, might appear but a weak plea: yet 'tis moſt certain, that I was ſurprized into the fatal error: I am under no promiſes, no ties, no engagements whatſoever to the lady. No ties, Sir! (interrupting him) Is your own honour no tie upon you, ſuppoſing you free from any other obligation? You ſee the conſequence of this fatal error, as you call it: here is a young perſon, of faſhion, perhaps (I don't inquire who ſhe is, but ſhe ſeems to have had no mean education) who is likely to bring a child into the world, to the diſgrace of herſelf and her family. On you, Sir, ſhe charges her diſhonour, and mentions your marrying another, as the blow which is to complete her ruin. Mr. Faulkland, is not all this truth? Be ſo good as to give me a direct anſwer. Madam, I cannot deny it; you have the proof of

it

it in your hands: from all that appears to you, I am indeed very blameable; nay, I do not pretend to vindicate my folly; but, madam, do not aggravate my fault in your own thoughts, by conſidering the affair in a more unfavourable light than what even her letter puts it. I conjure you, madam, to ſuffer Sir George to be my advocate on this occaſion; he is acquainted with every particular of the tranſaction, and can give you a detail that I will not preſume to do. Be pleaſed, Sir, replied I, to tell me what you mean to do in regard to this lady? I mean to do all that I *can* do, anſwered he; I ſhall provide a place of retreat for her, where ſhe will meet with the utmoſt care, tenderneſs, and reſpect; and where ſhe may continue with privacy till ſhe is in a condition to return home again to her friends. You may be ſure, madam, as to the reſt, I ſhall acquit myſelf conſiſtently with honour. That is as much as to ſay, Sir, ſaid I, that you will take care of the maintenance of your poor babe. He looked as if he had a mind to ſmile, forward man!

man! but conſtrained it. Doubtleſs, madam, I ſhall do all that is now in my power to do, in every circumſtance relating to her.

I felt myſelf exceedingly diſpleaſed with him; I was ſo diſappointed in my opinion of him, that it increaſed my reſentment. Sir, I proceeded, I muſt inform you, that there is as much *now* in your power as ever there was. You are ſtill unmarried; the way is open to you to repair the miſchief you have done: I will never bring down the curſes of an injured maid upon my daughter's head, nor purchaſe her worldly proſperity at the expence of the ſhame and ſorrow of another woman, for aught I know, as well born, as tenderly bred, and, till ſhe knew you, perhaps as innocent as herſelf. For heaven's ſake, madam! he cry'd, don't, don't, I beſeech you, pronounce my fate ſo haſtily.—You muſt pardon me, Sir, ſaid I, if I beg to hear no more on this ſubject. Sir George has already ſaid every thing you could expect of your friend to ſay in your juſtification, and more than became him to

to utter. All I can find by either you or him, is, that you think the loſs of honour to a young woman is a trifle, which a man is not obliged to repair, becauſe truly he did not *promiſe* to do ſo. This young creature, I underſtand, is a gentlewoman, very charming in her perſon, by your own account; one who loves you tenderly, and will ſhortly make you a father. Is not all this ſo? I grant, it, madam, ſaid the criminal. Then, Sir, what reaſon can you urge in your conſcience for not doing her juſtice? None—but your own inconſtant inclinations, which happen now to be better pleaſed with another woman, whom, perhaps, you might forſake in a few months.

I cannot pretend to repeat to you all he ſaid upon this laſt article: words of courſe you may be ſure. He intreated, over and over again, that I would permit Sir George to plead for him. I told him, that after the facts he had granted, it was impoſſible that either he or Sir George could make the affair better; that I was very ſorry to find myſelf diſappointed in a perſon of whom I had conceived ſo high an

opinion; and added, that as your illneſs made it very improper to let you know any thing of the matter for the preſent, I ſhould take it as a favour if he would permit me to retain the lady's letter to him for a few days, or till you were in a condition to have the matter broke to you. In the mean while, I requeſted that he would diſpenſe with my receiving any more viſits from him.

He ſaid ſome frantic things (for the man ſeems of a violent temper;) but finding me peremptory, took his leave with reſpect.

I underſtand from Sir George, that he flew directly down to Richmond, to a little houſe he has there, where he has remained ever ſince; but ſends every day to enquire after your health. Sir George, I am ſure, ſees him often; for he frequently goes out early in the morning, and ſtays abroad till night. The increaſe of your illneſs, from the time I received the laſt viſit from Mr. Faulkland, to ſuch a degree as to alarm us for your life, I ſuppoſe, prevented your brother from reaſſuming the ſubject; though I can perceive

ceive he is full of anger and vexation on the occaſion. You are now, my dear, God be praiſed, in a hopeful way of recovery, and I expect that George (who has, by eſpouſing this man's intereſts ſo warmly, very much offended me) that George, I ſay, will renew his ſolicitations in his favour. What do you ſay, my child? I ſhould be glad to know your thoughts, with regard to the part I have acted, as well as with reſpect to Mr. Faulkland's conduct.

Shall I own my weakneſs to you, my dear Cecilia? I was ready to melt into tears; my ſpirits, exhauſted by ſickneſs, were not proof againſt this unexpected blow; a heavy ſigh burſt from my heart, that gave me a little relief. You know my mother is rigid in her notions of virtue; and I was determined to ſhew her that I would endeavour to imitate her. I therefore ſuppreſſed the ſwelling paſſion in my breaſt, and, with as much compoſure as I could aſſume, told her; I thought ſhe acted as became her; and that, with regard to Mr. Faulkland, my opinion of his conduct was ſuch, that I never deſired to ſee him more. This anſwer, dictated

perhaps by female pride (for I will not anſwer for the feelings of my heart at that inſtant) was ſo agreeable to my mother, that ſhe threw her arms about my neck, and kiſſed me ſeveral times; bleſſing, and calling me by the moſt endearing names at every interval. Her tenderneſs overcame me; or, to deal with ſincerity, I believe I was willing to make it an excuſe for weeping. Oh! my dear mother, cry'd I, I have need of your indulgence; but indeed your goodneſs quite overpowers me. My dear love, ſaid ſhe, you deſerve it all, and more than it is in your mother's power to ſhew you. What a bleſſed eſcape have you had, my ſweet child, of that wild man! Little did I think, my Sidney, when I told you the ſtory of my firſt diſappointment, that a caſe ſo parallel would ſoon be your own With reſpect to you and me indeed, the incidents are nearly alike; but there is a wide difference between the two men. My lover had the grace to repent, and would have returned to his firſt engagements, if a dreadful malady had not overtaken him; but this graceleſs Faulkland perſiſts in his infide-

infidelity, and would make you as culpable as himſelf, I own to you, daughter, that the recollection of that melancholy event which happened to me, has given me a ſort of horror at the very thoughts of an union between you and Mr. Faulkland. You remember the ſad conſequences which I related to you of an infidelity of this kind; the poor forſaken woman died of grief, and the diſhoneſt lover ran mad. Think of this, my child, and let it encourage you to baniſh ſuch an unworthy man from your heart. I was afraid your regard for him might make this a difficult taſk; but I rejoice to find your virtue is ſtronger than your paſſion. *I* loved as well as you, but I overcame it when I found it a duty to do ſo; and I ſee your mother's example is not loſt upon you.

The honeſt pride that my mother endeavoured to inſpire me with, had a good effect, and kept up my ſpirits for a time.

She told me, ſhe was ſure that Sir George would quarrel with us both, when we came to talk upon the ſubject of the marriage;

but ſhe was entirely eaſy as to that, now ſhe knew that *my* ſentiments correſponded with her own,

You know my mother has ever been deſpotic in her government of me; and had I even been inclined to diſſent from her judgment in a matter of this importance, it would have been to no purpoſe; but this was really far from my thoughts.

I was as much diſguſted with Mr. Faulkland as ſhe was, and as heartily pitied the unhappy young creature whom he had undone.

You may recollect, my dear, that my mother, tho' ſtrictly nice in every particular, has a ſort of partiality to her own ſex, and where there is the leaſt room for it, throws the whole of the blame upon the *man*'s ſide; who, from her own early prepoſſeſſions, ſhe is always inclined to think are deceivers of women. I am not ſurprized at this bias in her; her early diſappointment, with the attending circumſtances, gave her this impreſſion. She is warm, and ſometimes *ſudden*, in her attachments; and yet it is not always difficult

ficult to turn her from them. The integrity of her own heart makes her liable to be impoſed on by a plauſible outſide; and yet the dear good woman takes a ſort of pride in her ſagacity. She had admired and eſteemed Mr. Faulkland prodigiouſly; her vexation was the greater, in finding her expectations diſappointed; and could I have been ſo unjuſt to the pretenſions of another, or ſo indelicate in regard to myſelf, as to have overlooked Mr. Faulkland's fault, I knew my mother would be inflexible. I therefore reſolved in earneſt to baniſh him from my thoughts. I found my mother was mightily pleaſed with her own management of the converſation ſhe had held with Mr. Faulkland. I think I talked pretty *roundly* to him, ſaid ſhe; but there was no other way; he is an artful man, and I was reſolved not to let him wind me about. He would make a merit of having *formed no deſigns* upon the young lady; why, poſſibly, he did not, till he found the poor ſoul was ſo ſmitten with him, that he thought ſhe would be an eaſy prey. Sir George im-

pudently inſinuated, that a man *muſt* not reject a lady upon theſe occaſions. I was aſhamed to hint to Mr. Faulkland at the circumſtance of his having actually paid a price for the girl; it was too groſs; and I think, had I mentioned it, muſt have ſtruck him dumb: though very likely he might have had ſome ſubterfuge, even for that aggravating part of the ſtory.

How I am ſhock'd, my Cecilia, to think of this! I was glad my mother had ſpared his confuſion on this particular; for though probably, as ſhe obſerved, he had come prepared with ſome evaſion to this charge, yet what a mean figure muſt a man make, who is reduced to diſingenuous ſhifts, to excuſe or palliate an action, deſpicable as well as wicked!

My brother came in, during our diſcourſe, to aſk me how I did. My mother anſwered his queſtion before I had time to ſpeak. She is pretty well, thank God! and not likely to break her heart, though ſhe *knows* your friend Mr. Faulkland's ſtory (and ſhe ſpoke it ſcornfully.) My brother ſaid, Sidney, Are *you* as averſe

averſe to Mr. Faulkland as my mother is? I replied, Brother, I wonder you can aſk me that queſtion, after what you have been juſt now told. I always ſaid, anſwered he, that you did not know the value of the man, and now I am convinced of it. I wiſh he had never ſeen you! I wiſh ſo too, ſaid I. Sir George walked about the room, and ſeemed vexed to death. For heaven's ſake, madam, (turning to my mother) now my ſiſter is tolerably recovered, ſuffer her to ſee Mr. Faulkland; let her hear what he has to ſay in his own vindication: I think you may truſt to her honour, and her diſcretion; and if the affair appears to her in ſo heinous a light as it does to you, I will be contented to give Mr. Faulkland up; but don't ſhut your own ears, and your daughter's too, againſt conviction.

Sir, you are diſreſpectful, ſaid my mother angrily. Dear brother, I cry'd, I beg you will ſpare me on this ſubject; my mother *has* given me leave to judge for myſelf; ſhe has repeated all that you have ſaid, and all that Mr. Faulkland has

been able to urge on the occaſion; and I am ſorry to tell you, that I think myſelf bound never to have any farther correſpondence with him; therefore you muſt excuſe me for not ſeeing him. And ſo the match is broke off, cry'd Sir George. *It is*, ſaid my mother peremptorily. It is, echoed I faintly. Why then, replied Sir George, (and he ſwore,) you will never get ſuch another whilſt you live. A pretty figure you'll make in the world, when you give it for a reaſon that you refuſed *ſuch* a man, after every thing was concluded upon, becauſe truly you found that he had had an intrigue! Why, Sidney, you'll be ſo laugh'd at! He addreſſed himſelf to me, though I knew he meant the reproof for my mother. Sir, anſwered ſhe, neither your ſiſter nor I ſhall trouble ourſelves much about the opinion of people who *can* laugh at ſuch things. You may put the matter into as ridiculous a light as you pleaſe; but this was no common intrigue; you *know* it was not, however you may affect to ſpeak of it. I don't ſuppoſe *any* of you are

Saints,

Saints, but, I truſt in Heaven, ſome are better than others. Oh! madam, madam, ſaid my brother, if you knew the world as well as *I* do, you would think that Mr. Faulkland is one of the beſt. God forbid! my mother anſwered coolly. Well, well, madam, cry'd Sir George, I ſee it is to no purpoſe to argue; there are many families of more conſequence than ours, and ten times the fortune, that will be very proud of Faulkland's alliance; and will hardly make it an objection to him, that he was led into a fooliſh ſcrape by the wickedneſs of one woman, and the folly of another. If you make my ſiſter wait for a huſband, till you find a man who never offended in that way, I think, mother, you had better take a little boy from his nurſe, breed him up under your own eye, and by the time Sidney is a good motherly gentlewoman, you may give her the baby to make a play-thing of. For my own part, I am heartily ſorry I ever interfered.—People of ſuch nice ſcruples had better chuſe for themſelves; but I cannot help thinking, that both

both Faulkland and I are very ill uſed. I told you (ſaid my mother to me) how he would behave. Sir George, I deſire you will not diſtreſs your ſiſter thus. (She ſaw me ſadly caſt down: I was ill and weak:) if you have no reſpect for *me*, have a little tenderneſs for her.——I beg your pardon, child, ſaid he, I did not mean to diſtreſs you, I pity *you*, indeed Sidney. I could have cry'd at his uſing that expreſſion, it humbles one ſo. Madam (to my mother,) you ſhall be troubled no farther by my friend or myſelf; all I ſhall ſay is this, that whenever my ſiſter gets a huſband of your ladyſhip's chuſing, I wiſh he may have half the worth of the poor rejected Faulkland.

My brother left the room with theſe words. My mother was downright in a paſſion, but ſoon cooled on his withdrawing.

My ſpirits were quite fatigued; and my mother left me, that I might take a little reſt.

What a ſtrange alteration have a few days produced! our domeſtic peace broke in

in upon by the unlucky difference between my mother and my brother. My near proſpect of———of———oh! let me be ingenuous, and ſay Happineſs, vaniſhed—Poor Mr. Faulkland! *Poor* do I call him? for ſhame, Sidney—but let the word go; I will not blot it. Mr. Faulkland forbid the houſe, myſelf harraſſed by a cruel diſorder, and hardly able to crawl out of bed. All this has fallen on me within theſe laſt fourteen black days. Then I dread the going abroad, or ſeeing company, I ſhall look ſo ſilly; for the intended wedding began to be talked of;—and the curioſity of people to know the cauſe of it's being broke off——What wild gueſſes will be made by ſome, and what lies invented by others! Then the ill-natured mirth of one half of the girls of my acquaintance, and the *as* provoking condolements of the other half——I am fretted at the thoughts of it—but it cannot be helped; I muſt bear it all——I wiſh I were well enough to get into the country, to be out of the reach of ſuch impertinence.

I long to know who this ill-fated girl

is,

is, that has been the cauſe of all this. *A gentlewoman, and very pretty; one that loves Mr. Faulkland, and will ſhortly make him a parent.* Thus my mother deſcribed her to Mr. Faulkland, and he aſſented to it. Oh! fie, fie, Mr. Faulkland, how could you be ſo cruel to *her?* How could you uſe *me* ſo ill? and Sir George knew of all this, and makes light of it! it is a ſtrange ſtory! My mother is ſevere in her virtue, but ſhe is in the right——My brother would ſacrifice every conſideration to aggrandize his family——To make a purchaſe of the unhappy creature, and that without her knowledge too, it is horrid! Away, away from my thoughts, thou vile intruder——Return to your Bath miſtreſs, ſhe has a better right to you than I have; ſhe implores your pity; ſhe has no refuge but you; and ſhe may be every way preferable to me——I wiſh I knew her name, but what is it to me; *mine* will never be Faulkland, *hers* ought. Perhaps Mr. Faulkland may be induced to marry her, when he ſees her in her preſent intereſting ſituation. He ſays he will pro-

provide a retreat for her; to be ſure he will have the compaſſion to viſit her: and then who knows what may happen? If I know my own heart, I think I do moſt ſincerely wiſh he may make her his wife; but then I would not chuſe to have it known ſuddenly; that might look as if he forſook me for her. *That*, I own, would a little hurt my pride. I wiſh not the truth to be known, for Mr. Faulkland's ſake; but then I ſhould not like to have a ſlur thrown on me.

I will add no more to this, but ſend the packet off at all events; I think it will find you at Paris.

Auguſt 1.——My health promiſes to return: my mother praiſes me, and calls me a Heroine. I begin to fancy myſelf one: our pride ſometimes ſtands in the place of virtue.

Sir George went to Richmond yeſterday. We have ſcarce ſeen him ſince the tiſt he had with us the other day. What ſtrange creatures theſe men are, even the beſt of them! and how light they make of

faults in one another, that ſhock us but to think of!

My mother takes his behaviour very ill: he ſtaid all night with his friend, and returned to town this morning: he only looked into my room, to aſk me how I did: my mother was ſitting with me. I believe that hindered him from coming in; for he looked as if he wanted to ſpeak to me. He bowed to my mother, but ſaid not a word; he went abroad again as ſoon as he was dreſſed, and did not come in till late. I fear his conduct will oblige us to ſeparate; for my mother will not brook any liberties to be taken with her: ſhe hinted as much, and ſaid ſhe believed Sir George was tired of living regularly.

She anticipated the requeſt I intended to make to her, of letting me go out of town; for ſhe ſaid, as ſoon as I was able, I ſhould remove into the country for a while. Sidney Caſtle is too long a journey for me at preſent to think of undertaking, and ſhe talks of going into Eſſex, on a viſit to Lady Grimſton, which we have long promiſed her. I ſhall like this better

better than going down to Wiltſhire, where the want of my Cecilia would make my old abode a melancholy place, eſpecially at this juncture.

Auguſt 4.———Sir George continues ſullen and cold to us: he never has had an opportunity of ſaying any thing particular to me ſince the day he ſaid ſo much. My mother ſcarce ever leaves me; he ſeems nettled at this. I believe he would endeavour to work on *me*, as he knows the attempt would be vain in regard to *her*. As I am now well enough to receive the viſits of our intimate acquaintance, I am never without company. I am really in pretty good ſpirits, and bear my diſappointment (as I told you I would) very handſomely. I never hear Mr. Faulkland's name mentioned, no more than if ſuch a man did not exiſt. We are to ſet out for lady Grimſton's houſe on Tueſday; it is but twenty miles from London; and I am already ſtrong enough to bear a longer journey.

My mother told Sir George, that if he liked

liked it, the houſe we are now in was at his ſervice during her time of it, of which there are ſome months to come; for ſhe ſaid, ſhe meant to go directly home from Eſſex. Sir George thanked her, but did not ſay whether he would accept of her offer or not.

Auguſt 5.—I have been obliged to turn away my poor Ellen. She was ſo imprudent as to receive a letter for me from Mr. Faulkland's man, contrary to my mother's expreſs commands. She brought it to me, and I gave it to my mother unopened; who put it directly into the fire without reading it, and told me it would oblige her, if I would part with the ſervant who had preſumed to take it after her prohibition. I inſtantly obeyed, and have juſt diſcharged her. I ſhould have a ſad loſs of her, only I am in hopes of having her place well ſupplied by an old acquaintance and play-fellow of ours, poor Patty Main; her father is dead, and ſhe is obliged to go to ſervice, for he has left a widow with ſix children. The eldeſt ſon,

ſon, you remember, ſerved his time to his father, and is juſt now ſetting out in buſineſs; but a young ſurgeon in a country town muſt take ſome time to eſtabliſh himſelf; though he is a very worthy youth, and I hear clever in his profeſſion.

Patty came to town laſt week with a lady from our neighbourhood, who applied to my mother to recommend the girl to wait on ſome perſon of faſhion. My mother has been looking out for a ſuitable place for her; but ſhe told me to-day, ſhe thought I could not do better than take her to myſelf; I ſhall be very glad to have her, for ſhe is an amiable young woman.

Auguſt 6.——We go out of town at ſeven o'clock to-morrow morning, as we are to dine at Grimſton-hall, and purpoſe going at our leiſure. I will ſteal a few minutes from ſleep, though it is now very late, to give you a ſhort ſcene which paſſed in my chamber about an hour ago.

Sir George (who, according to his late cuſtom, had been abroad all day) came into

into my room, where my mother and I were ſitting together. He aſked us, Did we hold our purpoſe of going out of town next day? Yes, certainly, my mother ſaid. And you intend going from lady Grimſton's to Sidney Caſtle? We do. Then, madam (to my mother), as it is the laſt trouble you are likely to have from Mr. Faulkland, I hope you will not refuſe to read this letter, which he has ſent you; and he took one out of his pocket, and preſented it to her. She did not make an offer to receive it, but anſwered, Sir George, it is to no purpoſe for Mr. Faulkland to ſolicit me; you know I don't eaſily alter my reſolutions when once they are fixed: he has given himſelf an unneceſſary trouble; pray excuſe me: it was not handſome of him to write to my daughter, after he knew my ſentiments. You need not be afraid of freſh ſolicitations, madam, ſaid my brother; I knew enough of your *firmneſs* (and he ſpoke the word firmneſs reluctantly, as if he would rather have uſed another, perhaps leſs reſpectful term); I knew enough

to

to aſſure Faulkland there was not the leaſt hope left for him; and though I do not know the ſubject of that letter, I can venture to aſſure you, it is not intended to move you in favour of his pretenſions: this he declared to me, before I would take the letter from him; but what puts it paſt doubt, is, that he ſet out this very evening from London, in order to embark for Germany. I could not help breathing a ſigh when Sir George ſaid this; but no body heard me. He ſtill held the letter in his hand, and again offered it to my mother: You need not be afraid of it, madam; I preſume it may be no more than to take a civil leave of you. I wiſh him well, ſaid my mother, taking the letter; if that be all, what he ſays may keep cold; and ſhe put it into her pocket without opening.

This being the eve of our journey, ſome little domeſtic matters, which my mother had to ſettle, called her out of the room. Sir George took that opportunity to aſk me, whether my mother had ſhewed me the letter which he had received

from

from Mr. Faulkland while he was at Bath, relative to that curſed affair, as he called it. I told him, my mother had repeated great part of the contents of it to me; and that the principal obſervation ſhe had made, was not favourable to *him*, on account of his being made the confidant of ſuch an affair.

I am very ſorry for your ſake, Sidney, ſaid he, that our mother is of ſo inflexible a temper; you have loſt by it, what you will have reaſon to regret as long as you live. Such amazing obſtinacy! ſuch unaccountable perverſeneſs! I do not want to ſhake your filial obedience; but I, for my own part, think that nothing but infatuation can account for your mother's conduct——Does ſhe want a man without paſſions? Or have you filled your head with ſuch chimærical notions as to—I interrupted him (for my brother is not always nice in his choice of words);—Dear Sir George, ſay no more; I am very well contented as I am. I will not increaſe your uneaſineſs, ſaid he, by telling you what Faulkland has ſuffered on this occaſion.

caſion. If ever love was carried to adoration, it was in the breaſt of that generous, charming fellow—but you have loſt him—and I have loſt him; thanks to my wiſe ſcrupulous mother for that. I begged of him to drop the ſubject. My mother came in to us again. Sir George bid us good night, and wiſhed us a good journey. The parting was cool enough. I am glad, however, there is not a total rupture. I believe he will continue in our houſe in town for a time, at leaſt.

Patty Main, who gladly accepted of the offer of my ſervice, came home to me this evening. She is grown very tall and genteel. I hardly know how to treat her as a ſervant; but the good girl is ſo humble, that ſhe does all in her power to make me forget that I ever knew her in a better ſituation; but in this ſhe fails of her purpoſe, for it only ſerves to remind me the more ſtrongly of it: ſhe is ſo ready, and ſo handy, that ſhe does twenty little offices that do not belong to her place, and which are not expected of her. My mother is exceedingly pleaſed with her, and

ſays

ſays it is ſuch a happineſs to have about me a young perſon virtuouſly brought up, that ſhe almoſt conſiders her as one of the family.

Grimſton-hall, Auguſt 8.

We arrived here yeſterday, and met a moſt friendly reception from the lady of this manſion. But before I ſay any more of her, I will haſten to a more intereſting ſubject. I have got Mr. Faulkland's letter to my mother; ſhe has juſt put it into my hands; and while ſhe walks in the garden with lady Grimſton, I will make haſte to tranſcribe it. Thus it is:

Madam,

I ſubmit to the ſentence you have paſſed on me. I am miſerable, but do not preſume to expoſtulate. I purpoſe leaving England directly; but would wiſh, if poſſible (a little to mitigate the ſeverity of my lot), to convince you, that the unhappy rejected man, who aſpired to the honour of being your ſon-in-law,

is

is not quite ſuch a criminal as he now appears to you.

To Sir George's friendſhip I know I am much indebted for endeavouring to vindicate me. It was not in his power, it was not in my own; for you ſaw all which I, in unreſerved freedom, wrote to him on the ſubject of my acquaintance with Miſs B.

I have but one reſource left; perhaps, madam, you will think it a ſtrange one. To the lady herſelf I muſt appeal. She will do me juſtice, and I am ſure will be ready to acknowledge that I am no betrayer of innocence, no breaker of promiſes; that I was ſurprized into the commiſſion of a fault, for which I have paid ſo dear a price.

Her teſtimony, madam, may perhaps have ſome weight with you; though I propoſe nothing more from it, than that you may think of me with leſs deteſtation. You have baniſhed me from your preſence: I am a voluntary exile from my country, and from my friends. I ſubmit to the chaſtiſement, and would

do any thing to expiate my offence againſt you and Miſs Bidulph. There is but *one* command which you can poſſibly lay on me, to which I would not pay a perfect and ready obedience; but that act, perhaps, is the *only* one which would make me appear worthy of your eſteem.

The lady whom it has been my ill fate to render unhappy, and by whom I am made unutterably ſo, will, ere long, come to a houſe at Putney, which I have taken on purpoſe for her. I have placed in it my houſekeeper, a grave worthy woman, under whoſe care ſhe will be ſafe, and attended with that ſecreſy and tenderneſs which her condition requires.

I have written to her a faithful account of every thing relative to my hoped-for alliance with your family, and the occaſion of the treaty's being broken off. As ſhe muſt, by this means, know that your ladyſhip is acquainted with her ſtory, I have told her, that, perhaps you might, from the intereſt you took in her misfortune, be induced to ſee her in her retirement. Let me, therefore, conjure you, madam,

madam, by that pious zeal which governs all your actions, and by the love you bear that daughter ſo deſervedly dear to you, to take compaſſion on this young lady. She has no friends, nor any acquaintance in this part of the kingdom; her ſituation will require the comfort of ſociety, and perhaps, the advice of wiſdom. It will be an act worthy of your humanity to ſhew ſome countenance to her.

I think ſhe will be in very good hands with the honeſt woman who waits her coming; but if any thing ſhould happen otherwiſe than well, it would make me doubly wretched.

To one who has no reſources of contentment in her own boſom, ſolitude cannot be a friend; this I fear may be the lady's caſe; and this makes me with the more earneſtneſs urge my requeſt to you. Forgive me, madam, for the liberty I take with you; a liberty, which though I confeſs it needs an apology, yet is it at the ſame time a proof of the confidence I have in you, which I hope will not affront either your candour or your virtue.

If you will condeſcend to grant this requeſt, I ſhall obtain the two wiſhes at preſent moſt material to my peace; the one to ſecure to the lady a compaſſionate friend, already inclined to eſpouſe her cauſe; the other, to put it in your power to be ſatisfied from the lady's own mouth of the truth of what I have aſſerted. I truſt to her generoſity to deal openly on this occaſion.

I wiſh you and Miſs Bidulph every bleſſing that heaven can beſtow, and am, with great reſpect,

Madam,

Your ladyſhip's moſt obedient,

Humble Servant,

ORLANDO FAULKLAND.

P. S. The lady will go by the name of Mrs. Jefferis: you will pardon me for not having mentioned her *real name.* I never vet told it even to Sir George; but I preſume he will make no ſecret of it to you, if you honour her with a viſit.

Poor Orlando! unhappy Miſs B.! I could name a third perſon, that is not

happy

happy neither. What a pity it is, that ſo many good qualities ſhould be blotted by imperfections! how tender is his compaſſion for this poor girl! how ingenuous his conduct! but ſtill he flies from her. I fear ſhe can never hope to recover him. There is but *one* thing, he ſays, which *he would not do*; *the only act, perhaps, by which he could make himſelf appear worthy of my mother's eſteem.* The meaning of this but too plainly ſhews him determined againſt marrying Miſs B. I don't know any thing elſe which would reconcile my mother to him.

I make no doubt of her complying with Mr. Faulkland's requeſt in ſeeing the lady: ſhe is very compaſſionate, particularly to her own ſex.

What a *ſtrange reſource* indeed is this of Mr. Faulkland's, to appeal to the lady herſelf! What am I to judge from it, but that the unfortunate victim, ignorant of the treachery that was practiſed againſt her by her wicked aunt, and that her deſtroyer paid a *price* for her diſhonour, exculpates him from the worſt part of the guilt, and perhaps, poor eaſy creature,

blames her own weakneſs only for the error which a concealed train of cunning and perfidy might have led her into?

But even ſuppoſing Miſs B. were generous and candid enough (and great indeed muſt be her candour and generoſity) to juſtify this guilty man, What would it avail? Did not my mother tell me ſhe conceived a *ſort of horror at the bare idea of an union between Mr. Faulkland and me?* This ariſes from the ſtrong impreſſion made on her by the unlucky event which blaſted her own early love. Strong and early prejudices are almoſt inſurmountable.

My mother's piety, genuine and rational as it is, is notwithſtanding a little tinctured with ſuperſtition; it was the error of her education, and her good ſenſe has not been able to ſurmount it; ſo that I know the univerſe would not induce her to change her reſolution in regard to Mr. Faulkland. She thinks he *ought* to marry Miſs B. and ſhe will *ever* think ſo. I wiſh he would; for I am ſure he never can be mine. The bell

rings

rings for breakfaſt; I muſt run down. My mother came up to dreſs juſt now, and ſtepped into my room. I returned her the letter, and ſhe aſked me, What I thought of Mr. Faulkland's requeſt? Madam, you are a better judge of the propriety of it than I am. I ſhall have no objection to ſeeing the unhappy lady, ſaid ſhe, ſince it ſeems he has appriſed her of my knowledge of her affairs. I am glad he has the grace to ſhew even ſo much compaſſion for her; perhaps it may be the beginning of repentance, and time may work a thorough reformation in him, if God ſpares him his life and his *ſenſes*. You ſee which way my good mother's thoughts tended. I did not, ſhe added, intend to return to London again; but this occaſion, I think, calls upon me; and I believe I ſhall go for a while, in order to ſee and comfort this poor young creature. She cannot yet be near lying in; and I ſuppoſe ſhe will not come to the houſe Mr. Faulkland ſpeaks of, till ſhe can no longer remain undiſcovered at home; ſo that a month or two hence

will be full ſoon enough for me to think of going to town.

I ſaw my mother reſted her compliance with Mr. Faulkland's requeſt, merely on one point; that of compaſſion to the girl. As for the other motive, ſaid ſhe, the hearing him juſtified from the *lady's own mouth*, I am not ſuch a novice in thoſe matters, but that I know when a deluding man has once got an aſcendancy over a young creature, he can coax her into any thing. Too much truth I doubt there is in this obſervation of my mother's.

But it is time to ſay ſomething of lady Grimſton. My Cecilia has never ſeen her, though I believe ſhe has often heard my mother ſpeak of her. They are nearly of an age, and much of the ſame caſt of thinking; though with this difference, that lady Grimſton is extravagantly rigid in her notions, and preciſe in her manner. She has been a widow for many years, and lives upon a large jointure at Grimſton-hall, with as much regularity and ſolemnity, as you would ſee in a monaſtery.

monaſtery. Her ſervants are all antediluvians: I believe her coach-horſes are fifty years of age, and the very houſe-dog is as grey as a badger. She herſelf, who in her youth never *could* have been handſome, renders herſelf ſtill a more unpleaſing figure, by the oddity of her dreſs; you would take her for a lady of Charles the Firſt's court at leaſt. She is always dreſſed out: I believe ſhe ſleeps in her cloaths, for ſhe comes down ruffled, and towered, and flounced, and fardingal'd, even to breakfaſt. My mother has a *very* high opinion of her, and ſays, ſhe *knows more of the world* than any one of her acquaintance. It may be ſo; but it muſt be of the old world; for lady Grimſton has not been ten miles from her ſeat theſe thirty years. 'Tis nine years ſince my mother and ſhe met before, and there was a world of compliments paſſed between them; though I am ſure they were ſincerely glad to ſee each other, for they ſeem to be very fond. They were companions in youth, that ſeaſon wherein the moſt durable friendſhips are contracted.

I believe her really a very good woman; ſhe is pious and charitable, and does abundance of good things in her neighbourhood; though I cannot ſay I think her amiable. There is an auſterity about her that keeps me in awe, notwithſtanding that ſhe is extremely obliging to me, and told my mother, I *promiſed to make a fine woman.* Think of ſuch a compliment to one of almoſt nineteen. My mother and ſhe call one another by their chriſtian names; and you would ſmile to hear the two old ladies (begging their pardons) *Lettying* and *Dollying* one another. This accounts to me for lady Grimſton's thinking *me* ſtill a child; for I ſuppoſe ſhe conſiders herſelf not much paſt girlhood, though to do her juſtice, ſhe has not a ſcrap of it in her behaviour.

Auguſt 10.——All our motions here are as regular as the clock. The family riſe at ſix; we are ſummoned to breakfaſt at eight; at ten a venerable congregation are aſſembled to prayers, which an ancient clergyman, who is curate of the

the pariſh, and her ladyſhip's chaplain, gives us daily. Then the old horſes are put to the old coach; and my lady, with her gueſts, if they chuſe it, take an airing; always going and returning by the ſame road, and driving preciſely to the ſame land-mark, and no farther. At half an hour after twelve, in a hall large enough to entertain a corporation, we ſit down to dinner; my lady has a grace of a quarter of an hour long; and we are waited on by four truly venerable footmen, for ſhe likes ſtate. The afternoon we may diſpoſe of as we pleaſe; at leaſt it is a liberty I am indulged in; and I generally ſpend my time in the garden, or my own chamber, till I have notice given me of ſupper's being on the table, where we are treated with the ſame ceremonials as at dinner. At ten exactly, the inſtant the clock ſtrikes the firſt ſtroke, my lady riſes with great ſolemnity, and wiſhes us a good night.

Auguſt 14.——You cannot expect, in ſuch a houſe as this is, my dear, that I

can

can be furniſhed with materials to give you much variety. Indeed theſe four laſt days have been ſo exactly the ſame in every particular, excepting that the diſhes at dinner and ſupper were changed, that I had reſolved to hang up my pen till I quitted Grimſton-hall, or at leaſt reſign it to Patty, and let her plod on and tell you how the wind blew ſuch a day; what ſort of a mantua lady Grimſton had on ſuch a day (though by the way it is always the ſame, always aſh-coloured tiſſue); what the great dog barked at, at ſuch an hour, and what the old parrot ſaid at ſuch a time; the houſe and the garden I have exhauſted my deſcriptive faculties on already, though they are neither of them worth deſcribing; and I was beginning to deſpair of matter to furniſh out a quarter of an hour's entertainment, when the ſcene began to brighten a little this auſpicious day, by the arrival of a coach full of viſitors. Theſe were a venerable dean, who is the miniſter of our pariſh, his lady and daughter, and a Mr. Arnold, a gentleman who is a diſtant relation.

lation of lady Grimſton's. He has a houſe in this neighbourhood, and is juſt come to an eſtate by the death of his elder brother.

This viſit has given me hopes that I may now-and-then have a chance for ſeeing a human face, beſides the antiques of the family, and thoſe which are depicted on the arras. Though not to diſparage the people, they were all agreeable enough in their different ways. The old dean is good-humoured and polite; I mean the true politeneſs, that of the heart, which dictates the moſt obliging things in ſo frank a manner, that they have not the leaſt appearance of flattery. Being very near-ſighted, he put on a pair of ſpectacles to look at me, and turning to Mr. Arnold, with a vivacity that would have become five-and-twenty, he repeated,

'With an air and a face,
'And a ſhape and a grace, &c.'

The young man ſmiled his aſſent, and my mother looked ſo delighted, that the good-natured dean's compliment pleaſed *me* for *her* ſake. Lady Grimſton, who is paſ-

paſſionately fond of muſick, has a very pretty organ in one of her chambers; Mr. Arnold was requeſted to give us a leſſon on it, which he very readily obliged us with. He plays raviſhingly; the creature made me envious, he touched it ſo admirably. I had taken a ſort of diſlike to him when he firſt came in, I cannot tell you why or wherefore; but this accompliſhment has reconciled me ſo to him, that I am half in love with him. I hope we ſhall ſee him often: he is really excellent on this inſtrument, and you know how fond I am of muſick.

Auguſt 15.——This packet is already ſo large that I am ſure it will frighten you. I will therefore ſend it off before I increaſe it; eſpecially as I am now ſo much in the hum-drum way, that I ought, out of policy, to make a break in my narrative, in order to encourage you to read it. Poſitively, if things do not mend, and that conſiderably too—Patty ſhall keep the Journal; for I find myſelf already diſpoſed to ſleep over it.

Auguſt

Auguſt 20.——I have looked over what Patty has writ for the five laſt days; upon my word ſhe is a very good journaliſt, as well as amanuenſis; and ſhe has given you, to the full, as good an account of matters and things as I could.

My time paſſes rather more tolerably than I expected. The dean's family ſeem to have broken the ſolitary *ſpell* that hung over the houſe, and we have company you ſee every day. Mr. Arnold never fails. I always make him play; he is very obliging, and, if he were not good natured, I ſhould tire him.

Auguſt 22.—I have had a letter from Sir George; he mentions not Mr. Faulkland; I too am endeavouring to forget him. When my mother goes to London, I will try to prevail on her to let me go down to Sidney caſtle. I have no inclination to go to town, and leſs to ſtay here. We are to have a concert to-morrow at Mr. Arnold's houſe. My lively good old dean touches the baſs viol, his daughter

daughter ſings prettily; I am to bear my part too; ſo that we begin to grow a little ſociable.

Auguſt 30.—Are you not tired of my Grimſton journal, my Cecilia? Day after day rolls on, and the ſame dull repetition! Lady Grimſton, the Dean, and Mr. Arnold, perpetually! there is no bearing this, you cry. Well, but here is a new perſonage arrived to diverſify the ſcene a little. Lady Grimſton's daughter, a ſweet woman; but her mother does not ſeem fond of her. It amazes me, for ſhe is perfectly amiable, both in temper and perſon; ſhe is a widow of about eight-and-twenty. Lady Grimſton appears to treat her with a diſtance very unmaternal; and the poor young woman ſeems ſo humbled, that I pity her. She is come but on a viſit, and we ſhall loſe her in a week, for which I am very ſorry, as I have taken a fancy to her.

September 1.——Poor Mrs. Vere! that is the name of lady Grimſton's daughter.

I can now give you the cauſe of her mother's coldneſs to her; I had it from herſelf; ſhe told me her little hiſtory this evening in the garden, with a frankneſs that charmed me.

How happy you are, dear Miſs Bidulph! ſaid ſhe: you ſeem to be bleſſed with one of the tendereſt of parents. I am indeed, I anſwered; ſhe is one of the beſt of mothers, and the beſt of women. She ſighed, and a tear ſtarted into her eye; I too was happy once, ſaid ſhe, when my indulgent father lived. I hope, madam, lady Grimſton is to you, what my good mother is to me. She ſhook her head: No, Miſs Bidulph, it muſt be but too obvious to you that ſhe is not. I ſhould not have introduced the ſubject, if the cold ſeverity of her looks were not ſo apparent that you muſt have taken notice of them. My mother is, undoubtedly, a very good woman; and you may naturally ſuppoſe, that my conduct has been ſuch as to deſerve her frowns; I will therefore tell you my melancholy, though ſhort, ſtory. It is now about twelve years ſince Mr. Vere

paid

paid his addreſſes to me. He was the eldeſt ſon of a gentleman of family and fortune, who then lived in this country. I was about ſixteen, and the darling of my father; who was perhaps the more indulgent to me, as he knew my mother's ſeverity. Mr. Vere was but two years older than myſelf, and a childiſh courtſhip had gone on for ſome time between us, before it was ſuſpected by any body; and to ſay the truth, before I was well aware of the conſequences myſelf. It happened, that an elderly gentleman of a great eſtate, juſt at that time ſaw and liked me, and directly made propoſals to my mother, as ſhe was very well known to hold the reins of government in her family.

This offer, I ſuppoſe, was advantageous; for ſhe immediately conſulted my father upon it, or rather gave him to underſtand that ſhe meant to diſpoſe of her daughter in marriage.

My father, who had no objection to the match, told her he was very well ſatisfied, provided I liked the gentleman; but ſaid, he

he hoped ſhe would not think of putting any force on my inclinations. My eldeſt ſiſter had been married ſometime before by my mother's ſole authority, and quite contrary to her own liking; the marriage had not turned out happily, and my father was reſolved not to have me ſacrificed in the ſame way.

My mother told him, ſhe was ſorry he had ſuch romantic notions, as to think a girl of my age capable of having any ideas of preference for one man more than another; that ſhe took it for granted I had never preſumed to entertain a thought of any man as yet, and ſuppoſed her precepts had not been ſo far thrown away upon me, as that I could let it enter into my head that any thing but paternal authority was to guide me in my choice.

My father, from the gentleneſs of his nature, had been ſo accuſtomed to acquieſce, that he made no other reply than to bid my mother uſe her diſcretion. He came directly to me notwithſtanding, and told me what had paſſed. It was then, for the firſt time, that I diſcovered I loved

Mr.

Mr. Vere. I burſt into tears, and clinging round my father's neck, begged of him to ſave me from my mother's rigour. My geſture and words were too paſſionate for him not to perceive that there was ſomething more at my heart than mere diſlike of the old man. He charged me to deal ſincerely. I loved him too well, and was myſelf too frank to do otherwiſe. In ſhort, I confeſſed my inclination for Mr. Vere, and his affection for me.

Though my kind father chid me gently for admitting a lover without his or my mother's approbation, yet at the ſame time he told me, he would endeavour to diſſuade her from proſecuting the other match; though he could wiſh, he ſaid, I would try to bring myſelf to accept of it; adding, he was afraid my mother would be much incenſed by a denial.

My mother was fond of grandeur; and would not like to have me marry any one, who could not at once make me miſtreſs of a fine houſe, and a fine equipage; which I knew I muſt not expect to be the caſe with Mr. Vere. His father had

had ſeveral children, and was very frugal in his temper: beſides, as he was but of the middle age, and of a very healthy conſtitution, his ſon's proſpect of poſſeſſing the eſtate was, to all human appearance, at a very great diſtance.

Theſe diſcouragements, however, did not hinder me from indulging my wiſhes. My father's tenderneſs was the foundation on which I built my hopes. I told Mr. Vere the deſigns of one parent, and the kind condeſcenſion of the other. Emboldened by this information, he ventured to diſcloſe his love to my father, begging his intereſt with my mother in his favour. He had a great kindneſs for the youth, and was ſo fond of me, that he would readily have conſented to my happineſs, if the fear of diſobliging my mother had not checked him. He repreſented to her, in the mildeſt manner, the utter diſlike I had expreſſed of the propoſed match, and conjured her not to inſiſt on it. My mother, unuſed to be controuled, was filled with reſentment both againſt him and me; ſhe ſaid, he encouraged me in my

my diſobedience; and that, if he did not unite his authority to hers, in order to compel me to marry the gentleman ſhe approved of, it would make a total breach between them.

My good father, who loved my mother exceedingly, was alarmed at this menace. Unwilling to come to extremities either with her or me, he was at a loſs how to act. His paternal love at length prevailed, and he determined, at all events, to ſave me from the violence which he knew would be put upon my heart.

My mother had never condeſcended to talk to me on the ſubject: ſhe thought my immediate obedience ought to have followed the bare knowlege of her will. She forbad me her ſight, and charged me never to appear before her, till I came with a determination to obey her.

However ſevere this prohibition was, I yielded to it with the leſs reluctance, as my father's tender love made me amends for my mother's harſhneſs. Perhaps, had ſhe vouchſafed to reaſon a little with me,

temper-

tempering her arguments with a motherly kindneſs, ſhe would have found me as flexible as ſhe could wiſh; but the courſe ſhe took had a very contrary effect. I thought myſelf perſecuted, and that it was for the honour of my love to perſevere. On the other hand, my father's ſecret indulgence encouraged me in the ſentiments I entertained, and I now determined, not only to refuſe my old lover, but to have my young one.

My mother had given me a ſtated time in which I was to come to a reſolution, and if I did not, at the expiration of it, acquieſce, I was to be pronounced a reprobate, and to be no more conſidered as her child. In this emergency I had recourſe to my father. I told him there was nothing which I was not ready to ſuffer, rather than marry the man I hated: my greateſt affliction was the uneaſineſs I ſaw him endure on my account; for my mother reproached him daily with my obſtinacy.

My father ſaid, he thought the alternative offered by my mother, was to be avoided

avoided but in one way, and that was by marrying Mr. Vere: For, added he, when ſhe finds you reſolute in your refuſal of her choice, not even my paternal authority will be able to ſcreen you from her ſeverity, and your life will be made miſerable, without your father's being able to relieve you. On the other hand, when you are out of her houſe, ſhe cannot diſtreſs you, nor prevent me from doing you the juſtice which I owe my child. Nay, poſſibly in time, I may be able to work out a reconciliation between you; but ſhe muſt not know that I was conſenting to this marriage, leſt an irreconcileable quarrel ſhould enſue. I fell at my father's feet, and embraced his knees, for this tender and unexpected proof of his affection.

Mr. Vere's father was no ſtranger to his ſon's attachment, and we were very ſure he would readily come into the propoſal which my father intended to make.

The two parents had a meeting ſecretly, where all the terms of portion and ſettlement were ſpeedily and privately adjuſted. Mr. Vere, the father, who had been long intimate

intimate in our family, knew very well the neceſſity there was for keeping the ſecret. After this, my lover and I were to be married privately, without the knowledge, ſeemingly, of any one in either family, excepting one of the Miſs Veres, who was to be preſent; and when the time of my probation was expired, my father was to let my mother into the knowledge of this affair, as a thing he had juſt diſcovered; and to pacify her anger as well as he could.

Every thing was conducted in the manner propoſed. I was married with the utmoſt privacy, and continued in my father's houſe till the day arrived, when I was to give my definitive anſwer.

Unfortunately for me, my mother choſe to receive it from my own mouth, and called me into her preſence. I appeared before her trembling and terrified: I had not ſeen her for a fortnight, and I was in dread, leſt the diſcovery I had to make, ſhould baniſh me her ſight perhaps for ever, unleſs my father might influence her in time to forgive me. She

aſked me, with a ſtern brow, What I had reſolved on? I had not courage to make her an anſwer, but burſt into tears. She repeated her queſtion; and I could only reply, Madam, it is not in my *power* to obey you. She did not comprehend the meaning of my words, but imputing them to obſtinacy, commanded me to leave the room, and not to ſee her face till I came to a proper ſenſe of my duty; at the ſame time ordering me into my chamber, where I was to be locked up.

I flew to my father, and conjured him to let my mother know the truth at once, that I might be no longer ſubject to ſuch harſh treatment; for I knew the being ſent home to my huſband would be the conſequence of her being told that I had one.

My poor father was almoſt afraid to undertake the taſk, though he had been the chief promoter of my marriage, and his authority ought to have given ſanction to it. He ventured however to let her know, that I had confeſſed to him what my fears of her immediate reſentment would

would not ſuffer me to diſcover whilſt I was in her preſence; and what my averſion to the man ſhe propoſed to me, and the rigours I had been threatened with, if I refuſed him, had driven me to. The rage my mother flew into, was little ſhort of phrenzy, and my father made haſte to ſend me out of the houſe.

Mr. Vere's whole family received me with great tenderneſs; but I was ſorry at leaving my father, whoſe viſits to me were made but ſeldom, and even thoſe by ſtealth.

My ſituation, though I was united to the man I loved, and careſſed by all his family, was far from being happy. My mother's inflexible temper was not to be wrought upon, notwithſtanding my father did his utmoſt to prevail on her to ſee and to forgive me; and ſhe carried her reſentment ſo far, that ſhe told my father, unleſs he cut me off intirely in his will, ſhe was determined to ſeparate herſelf totally from him. This was an extremity he by no means expected ſhe would have gone to.

In a fit of ſickneſs, which had ſeized him a few years before, he had left me ten thouſand pounds; five of this he had ſecretly transferred to Mr. Vere on the day of my marriage, and had promiſed him to bequeath me five more at his death.

In conſequence of this diſpoſition, he purpoſed making a new will, ſo that he the leſs ſcrupled giving my mother up the old one, with a promiſe of making another agreeable to her requeſt.

My mother's jointure was already ſettled on her; my eldeſt ſiſter had received her portion; ſo that there was little bequeathed by this teſtament, but my fortune, and a few other ſmall legacies.

My mother tore the will with indignation, and not ſatisfied with my father's promiſe, inſiſted on his putting it into execution immediately. In ſhort, his eaſy temper yielded to her importunities, and he had a will drawn up by her inſtructions, in which I was cut off with one ſhilling, and my intended fortune bequeathed to my eldeſt ſiſter. My mother was made reſiduary legatee to every thing that

that ſhould remain, after paying all the bequeſts. This would have amounted to a conſiderable ſum, if the half of my portion, which was already paid without her knowledge, had not made ſuch a diminution in the perſonal eſtate, that after paying my ſiſter the whole of what was ſpecified in the will, there was ſcarce any thing likely to remain.

Had my mother known this ſecret, ſhe would not perhaps have been ſo ready to have made my father deviſe all my intended fortune to my ſiſter. My father, who was aware of this, durſt not however inform her at that juncture, how much ſhe hurt herſelf by forcing him to ſuch meaſures. She inſiſted upon his leaving the whole of what he deſigned for me to my eldeſt ſiſter; as well to convince him, ſhe ſaid, that ſhe had no ſelf-intereſted views, as to be an example to other rebellious children.

My father had no remedy on theſe occaſions, but a patient acquieſcence: the will was made, and my mother herſelf would keep it.

My father took an opportunity the ſame day to inform me what he had done; but aſſured me, he would immediately make another will, agreeable to his firſt intentions, and leave it in the hands of a faithful friend.

This was his deſign; but alas he lived not to execute it! He was ſeized that night with a paralytic diſorder, which at once deprived him of the uſe of his limbs and his ſpeech. They who were about him believed he retained his ſenſes, but he was not capable of making himſelf underſtood even by ſigns. Alarmed with the diſmal account of my beloved father's ſituation, I flew to the houſe without conſidering my mother's diſpleaſure; but I was not permitted to ſee him. I filled the houſe with my cries, but to no purpoſe; I had not the ſatisfaction of receiving even a farewel look from him, which was all he was capable of beſtowing on me.

He languiſhed for ſeveral days in this melancholy condition, and then, in ſpite of the aid of phyſic, expired.

The

The loſs of this dear father ſo intirely took up my thoughts, that I never reflected on the loſs of the remaining part of my fortune; but it was not ſo with my father-in-law. There had been a ſettlement made on me in conſequence of the fortune promiſed; though not equal to what it demanded, yet ſuperior to the half which was paid. He relied on my father's word for the remainder, and had no doubt of its being ſecured to him, knowing his circumſtances, as well as his ſtrict integrity, and that my ſiſter had actually received the ſame fortune which I was promiſed.

Mr. Vere had four daughters, and it was on this fortune he chiefly depended to provide for them.

The news of my being cut off with a ſhilling exceedingly ſurprized and exaſperated him. Unluckily I had not mentioned to him, nor even to my huſband, the will which my father had been obliged to make. The aſſurances he gave me, of immediately making another in my favour, prevented me; as I thought it would

only be a very ſevere proof of my mother's enmity to the family, which I could have wiſhed to conceal from them; eſpecially as I did not imagine it would have affected me afterwards. Mr. Vere the elder was from home when my father died, and his buſineſs detained him for more than a month after his funeral was over. My huſband, on this occaſion, ſhewed the tender and diſintereſted love he bore me; he affected to make as light as poſſible of this unexpected diſappointment, but at the ſame time expreſſed his uneaſineſs, leſt his father ſhould carry matters to an extremity with my mother, from whom he knew we were to expect nothing by mild methods.

It was now thought adviſeable, that I ſhould write to my mother, to condole with her on my father's death; again to intreat her forgiveneſs of my fault, and, as ſome mitigation of it, to acknowledge that it was not only with my father's privity, but even with his conſent and approbation, that I had married.

I wrote this letter in a ſtrain of the utmoſt

moſt humility, without mentioning a word of my fortune; *that* I thought it would be time enough for me to do, if I could prevail on my mother to ſee me, and would at all events come better from my huſband or his father, than from me. But I gained nothing by this, only ſome unkind reflections on my father's memory, and a meſſage, that ſince he thought proper to marry his daughter in a manner ſo highly diſagreeable to her mother, he ſhould have taken care of providing for her; as he could not expect a parent, ſo diſobliged as ſhe had been, would take any notice of me.

My mother had been left ſole executrix to my father's forced will; and ſhe took care to put my ſiſter, and the other legatees, into poſſeſſion of what was bequeathed to them, in a very ſhort time after his deceaſe. She found there was an unexpected deficiency in his perſonal fortune, inſomuch that there was barely enough to pay his debts; and that her being left the reſidue, after the ſpecified legacies were paid, amounted to nothing. On the con-

trary, had my father's juſt intentions taken place, in leaving me five thouſand pounds, ſhe would have come in for the other five; but the whole ten thouſand now went to my ſiſter.

She was not long however at a loſs to know how this came to paſs. Mr. Vere determined to aſſert his own, and his ſon's right; and being exceedingly provoked at my mother's behaviour, wrote to her immediately on his return home; and having informed her of the ſettlement made on me, on account of the fortune already paid, and what was farther agreed on to be paid by my father, told her, he expected that this promiſe ſhould be punctually fulfilled. He ſaid, he knew ſhe had it in her power to do this; and ſince it was by her contrivance I had been robbed of my juſt right, if honour, and the duty of a parent, would not induce her to make me proper amends, ſhe muſt excuſe him, if he made uſe of ſuch means as the laws allowed him, in order to compel her.

Such a letter, to a woman of my mother's

ther's temper, met with ſuch a reception as might be expected. She tore it before his meſſenger's face; and deſired him to tell his maſter, that as what he had already obtained was by fraud, ſo he was at liberty to make uſe of force to recover the remainder; but, with her conſent, he never ſhould have a ſingle ſhilling.

This exaſperating reply made my father-in-law directly commence a ſuit againſt her, in which the other legatees were made parties. The diſtreſs I felt on this occaſion is ſcarce to be imagined; the breach was now ſo widened between my mother and my huſband's family, that there remained not the leaſt hope of its ever being cloſed. Mr. Vere unwillingly joined with his father in purſuit of theſe meaſures. He would for my ſake much rather have yielded up his expectations, than ſupported them at the expence of my quiet; but his father's will, and juſtice to the reſt of his family, compelled him to proceed, and deprived me of any pretence for interpoſing.

The law-ſuit was carrying on with great

great acrimony on both ſides, when an event happened, that made me then, and has indeed ever ſince, look with indifference on every thing in this life; it was the death of my huſband. He was ſnatched from me by a violent fever, before he reached his twentieth year.

I will not pretend to deſcribe my ſufferings to you on this ſad occaſion; they were aggravated by my being near the time of lying-in.

Whatever affliction Mr. Vere felt for the death of his only ſon, it did not make him forgetful of what he owed his daughters; and he was reſolved to carry on the law-ſuit with the utmoſt vigour.

You may ſuppoſe the houſe wherein I had loſt a beloved huſband appeared a diſmal place to me, eſpecially in my preſent ſituation. I thought too, my father's looks began to grow colder to me than they uſed to be; and I begged I might have his permiſſion to remove for a while. He did not oppoſe it, and I went, at the preſſing intreaties of your favourite, the good old dean, to his houſe; where he and his

his lady behaved to me with more than parental tenderneſs. My health was in ſo declining a way, that this worthy man (as I have ſince learned) made ſeveral applications to my mother to ſee me, but without ſucceſs. At length the hour of my delivery arrived, and I was brought to bed of a dead female child. The eſtate, in caſe of Mr. Vere's dying without iſſue, devolved on his ſiſters; and I was in hopes this circumſtance, ſo favourable to the young ladies, would have induced their father to have been leſs rigorous in perſiſting in his claim. But in this I was deceived; he loved money, and was beſides full of reſentment againſt my mother. I thought however of an expedient, which I flattered myſelf might work upon him; and by good fortune it ſucceeded.

Mr. Vere, though I had left his houſe, viſited me conſtantly, and kept up a ſhew of tenderneſs, which I am ſure he had not in his heart. I told him one day, whilſt I was ſtill confined to my bed, that as I had now loſt both my huſband and my child, a very moderate income would

be

be ſufficient for me; and that as I valued my mother's peace of mind, beyond any ſelfiſh conſideration, I was very willing to give up half my jointure, provided he would drop his ſuit. Mr. Vere ſeemed ſurprized at the propoſal: he ſaid, he wondered I could be ſo blind to my own intereſt, and that all he was doing was purely for my ſake. I thanked him for his pretended friendſhip, but aſſured him, he could ſerve me no way ſo effectually, as by coming into the meaſure I propoſed. Mr. Vere ſaid, I talked like a child; but he would conſider of it. The following day he called on me again, and told me, that to make me eaſy he was willing to come into my propoſal; that he would have the proper inſtruments drawn, by which I was to relinquiſh half my jointure; and he in conſequence to give up all claim on my father's eſtate.

I was much better pleaſed at this loſing agreement, than if I had acquired a large acceſſion of fortune.

Mr. Vere ſoon got the proper deeds ready, and they were executed in form.

I now

I now relapſed into an illneſs, from which I was ſuppoſed to have been quite recovered, and my life was thought in great danger. I have ſince been told, that Mr. Vere repented his agreement at that juncture, and told ſome of his friends, that if he had not been ſo haſty, he ſhould have had a chance for my jointure and my fortune too.

I begged of the dean to go to my mother, and uſe his laſt efforts on her, to prevail with her to ſee and forgive me, before I died; at the ſame time I ſent her the releaſe I had procured from Mr. Vere, which I knew was the moſt acceptable preſent I could make her. The dean urged the danger I was in, without its ſeeming to make much impreſſion on her. I am willing to believe, that ſhe thought the dean exaggerated in his account of my illneſs. He owned to me himſelf, that he was ſhocked to find her ſo obdurate. At length, he took the paper out of his pocket, and preſenting it to her, I am ſorry, madam, ſaid he, I cannot prevail with you to act like a parent or a chriſtian;

your

your daughter I fear will not ſurvive her preſent malady; but ſhe will have the comfort to conſider, that ſhe has left nothing unattempted to obtain that forgiveneſs, which you ſo cruelly deny her. I hope, lady Grimſton, your laſt hours may be as peaceful, as hers I truſt will be from this reflection. There, madam—ſhe has by that inſtrument left you diſengaged from a troubleſome and vexatious lawſuit, that would, if purſued, infallibly turn out to your diſadvantage; it was all ſhe *could* do, and what few children, uſed like her, *would* have done.

My mother, a good deal alarmed at the dean's manner of ſpeaking, now examined the contents of the paper. She ſeemed affected, and called him back, as he was juſt leaving the room. She told him, ſhe was not loſt to the feelings of nature; and that if he thought her preſence would contribute to eaſe my mind of the remorſe it muſt needs labour under, ſhe was not againſt ſeeing me.

The good man, glad to find her in this yielding diſpoſition, told her ſhe could not

not too ſoon execute her intention; and preſſed her to come to his houſe directly. She ſuffered him to put her into his coach, and he carried her home with him. The interview, on my ſide, was attended with tears of joy, tenderneſs, and contrition. My mother did not depart from her uſual auſterity; ſhe gave me but her hand to kiſs, and pronounced her forgiveneſs and her bleſſing in ſo languid a manner, as greatly damped the fervor of my joy.

She ſtaid with me not more than a quarter of an hour, and having talked of indifferent things, without once ſo much as mentioning what I had done, ſhe took a cold and formal leave.

This interview, as little cordial as my mother's behaviour was to me, had ſo good an effect on me, that I began perceptibly to mend from that hour. She ſent indeed conſtantly to inquire how I did; but avoided coming, leſt, as ſhe ſaid, ſhe ſhould meet with Mr. Vere, whom ſhe could never forgive. As ſoon as I was in a condition to go abroad, I went to pay

pay my duty to her. She received me with civility, but no tenderneſs; nor has ſhe ever from that time made me the leaſt recompence for what I have loſt; her permitting me to ſee her, ſhe thinks ſufficient amends.

I did not chooſe to return to Mr. Vere's houſe, as I had only a polite, not a kind invitation. One of his daughters, ſhe who had been preſent at my marriage, and who always had ſhewn moſt affection towards me, was about this time married to a gentleman, whoſe eſtate lay in another county. When the bride went home, ſhe preſſed me to go with her ſo warmly, that I could not refuſe her; and during the time I ſtaid with her, I received ſo many marks of tenderneſs from her, that I reſolved to ſettle in her neighbourhood; and have now a little houſe near her, where I have reſided conſtantly ever ſince. I come once or twice a year to pay a viſit to my mother; but my reception, as you may ſee, is always cold, and I ſeldom ſtay more than a few days.

Old Mr. Vere is dead; and his daughters,

ters, who were coheireſſes to his eſtate, are all married, ſo that the family is intirely diſperſed; but notwithſtanding this, and the number of years that have paſſed over ſince my marriage, my mother cannot yet endure the name of the family: and always, as you may have obſerved, calls me by my maiden name.

I was much affected at the ſtory of the amiable Mrs. Vere. The ſweet melancholy, which predominates in her countenance, ſhews that the ſpirits, when broken in the bud of youth, are hardly to be recovered. What a tyrant this lady Grimſton is! I did not admire her before, but I now abſolutely diſlike her. What a wife and a mother has ſhe been to a huſband and a daughter, who might have conſtituted the happineſs of a woman of a different temper! And yet ſhe paſſes for a wonderful good woman, and a pattern of all thoſe virtues of a religion which meekneſs and forgiveneſs characteriſe. She is miſtaken, if ſhe thinks that auſterity is neceſſary to chriſtianity. The moſt that my charity allows me to believe of

ſuch

ſuch people is, that they impoſe on *themſelves*, at a time when the moſt diſcerning perhaps think that they are endeavouring to impoſe on others.

What an angel is my good mother, when compared to this her friend, whom her humility makes her look upon as her ſuperior in virtue! I am very angry with Sir George, who in his reſentment, ſaid to me once, that ſhe was like lady Grimſton. I then knew but little of that lady's character, or I ſhould have reproved him for it.

I conjured Mrs. Vere to make her viſit longer than ſhe had at firſt intended. She told me, ſhe would moſt gladly do it; but that it was a liberty ſhe did not dare to take, unleſs her mother aſked her to prolong it; which, ſhe ſaid, ſhe poſſibly might do in complaiſance to me.

September 4.——My mother I find has made lady Grimſton her confidant in relation to my affairs; the dear woman never keeps her mind to herſelf on any ſubject. Lady Grimſton highly applauds her conduct

duct in that buſineſs; and beſtowed a few civil words on me for my filial duty, intermixed with an ungrateful compariſon of her own daughter's behaviour. And ſhe condoled with herſelf, by ſaying that *good parents* had not always *good children.* She told my mother, that ſhe wiſhed to ſee the child (meaning me) happily diſpoſed of; for that, notwithſtanding the prudence of my behaviour, the world would be apt to caſt reflections on me, on account of the abruptneſs with which the match was broken off, without the true reaſons being known: and my illneſs, ſhe ſaid, might be imputed to the diſappointment; which might incline people to ſuſpect the rejection had been on Mr. Faulkland's ſide. What a provoking hint was this, my dear! it has really alarmed my mother, who depends much on the judgment of her friend, and has at the ſame time ſo nice a regard to the honour of her family—I wiſh that formal old woman would mind her own buſineſs.

September 6. —— My mother and lady Grim-

Grimſton have had abundance of private confabulation theſe two days, from which Mrs. Vere and I are excluded. I wiſh there may not be ſome miſchief a brewing. One thing, however, has given me pleaſure; lady Grimſton has invited her daughter to ſtay at Grimſton-hall as long as my mother and I continue here.

Mrs. Vere tells me, ſhe ſuſpects the ſubject of their conferences; but ſhe is perverſe, and will not tell me what ſhe thinks, for fear, as ſhe ſays, ſhe ſhould have gueſſed wrong, and her ſurmiſes would only teaze me.

September 10. —— A packet ſent me from London—A letter from Sir George—one from my Cecilia—and ſo ſoon too! Welcome, welcome, thou faithful meſſenger from the faithfuleſt of hearts!

Thou dear anticipating little propheteſs! What put it into thy head to call Mr. Arnold a new conqueſt, upon my but barely mentioning him to you? I was juſt going to tell you all; and behold your own whimſical imagination has ſuggeſted the moſt material part to you already.

ready. You deſire me to be ſincere: was that neceſſary, my ſiſter, from *you* to *me?* You ſay, you are *ſure Mr. Arnold is, or will be my lover*; and inſiſt on my being more particular in my deſcription of him. What a ſtrange girl you are! Again I aſk you, What put this into your head? What buſy little ſpirit of intelligence flew to you with this news before I knew it myſelf? For as to the fact, it is but too certain.

This has been the ſubject of my mother's and lady Grimſton's private conferences; and Mrs. Vere (ſly thing as ſhe is) gueſſed it. It ſeems Mr. Arnold diſcloſed his paſſion to lady Grimſton, in order to aſk her advice about it. She loves mightily to be conſulted; and, ill-ſtarred as I am, did me the honour to recommend me ſtrongly to him; and ſhe has prepoſſeſſed my mother too in favour of this new man. I wiſh the meddling old dame had been dumb. Now ſhall I go through another fiery trial! Heaven help me, if lady Grimſton were to be my judge! But my mother is all goodneſs.

Well,

Well, but you want a deſcription of this man. I will give it to you, though I have ſcarce patience to write about him. Indeed, Cecilia, I am vexed; I foreſee a great deal of trouble from that quarter.—But come, I will try what I can ſay.

The man is about thirty, genteel, and handſome enough; at leaſt he is reckoned ſo, and I believe I ſhould think him ſo, if I were not angry with him. He is very like your brother Henry; and you know he is an allowed handſome man. He ſeems to have plain good ſenſe, and is good-humoured I believe: I do not know of what colour his eyes are, for I never looked much at him. Lady Grimſton ſays he is a *ſcholar* (a thing ſhe pretends to value highly) and a mighty ſober, pious, worthy gentleman. He is of a very good family; and has an eſtate of about fifteen hundred pounds a year, upon which there is a jointure of three hundred pounds a year, paid to his brother's widow. Part of the eſtate is in Kent, and and part in this county of Eſſex, where he has a manſion-houſe, a well-enough looking

looking old-faſhioned place, ſomething in the Grimſton-hall ſtile, at about a mile diſtance from this; where he paſſes moſt of his time.

I have told you already, he plays divinely on ſeveral inſtruments; this is the only circumſtance about him that pleaſes me.

He has not yet made his addreſſes to me in form; yet we all know that he intends it, from his uncommon aſſiduity towards me; but he has a ſort of reſerve about him, and loves to do every thing in his own way.

Bleſs me!—here he is—his chariot has juſt driven into the court; and Mrs. Vere peeps in upon me, and with a moſt vexatious archneſs, bids me come down to the parlour; but I will not, unleſs my mother deſires me. I will go into the garden, to be for a while out of the way.

September 11. —— Yeſterday evening was productive of nothing but looks and compliments, and bows, and ſo forth; except two or three delightful pieces of

muſick, which he executed incomparably. But this morning, my Cecilia! Oh, this morning! the man ſpoke out, told me in downright plain Engliſh, that he loved me! How inſipid is ſuch a declaration, when it comes from one who is indifferent to us! I do not know how it was, but inſtead of being abaſhed, I could have ſmiled in his face when he declared himſelf; but you may be ſure I did not; that would not have been pretty.

I was ſitting in the little drawing-room, reading, when he came in. To be ſure he was ſent to me by the ancient ladies, otherwiſe he would not have intruded; for the man is not ill-bred. The book happened to be Horace; upon his entering the room, I laid it by; he aſked me politely enough, what were my ſtudies. When I named the author, he took the book up, and opening the leaves, ſtarted, and looked me full in the face; I coloured. My charming Miſs Bidulph, ſaid he, do you prefer this to the agreeable entertainment of finiſhing this beautiful roſe here, that ſeems to bluſh at your neglect

gleƈt of it? He ſpoke this, pointing to a little piece of embroidery that lay in a frame before me. I was nettled at the queſtion; it was too aſſuming. Sir, I hope I was as innocently, and as uſefully employed; and I aſſure you, I give a greater portion of my time to my needle, than to my book.

You are ſo lovely, madam, that nothing you can do needs an apology. An apology, I'll aſſure you! did not this look, my dear, as if the man thought I ought to beg his pardon for underſtanding Latin? For this accidental, and I think (to a woman) trivial accompliſhment, I am indebted, you know, to Sir George, who took ſo much pains with me the two or three ſummers he was indiſpoſed at Sidney Caſtle.

He then proceeded to tell me how much he admired, how much he loved me! and that having been encouraged by lady Grimſton's aſſuring him that I was diſengaged (obſerve that) he preſumed to tell me ſo. Oh, thought I, perhaps thou art thyſelf a Grimſtonian,

and do not think it neceſſary that the heart ſhould be conſulted. I anſwered him mighty civilly, and mighty little to the purpoſe. Sir, I thank you for your favourable ſentiments—Lady Grimſton does me a great deal of honour—I think myſelf happy in her good opinion—But he was not to be ſo put off, he preſſed me to give him hopes, as he called it. Alas! I have no hopes to give him. He ſaid, he would not preſume to mention his love to my mother, though lady Grimſton preſſed him to it (it was like her) till he had firſt declared himſelf to me. This was not indelicate; my heart thanked him for it, though I only returned him a bow. We were ſeaſonably (to me, at leaſt) interrupted here, by the arrival of my friend the dean. He had come to ſee lady Grimſton, juſt as Mr. Arnold had entered into converſation with me; the old gentleman had a mind to walk in the garden; the little drawing-room, where we were, opened into it by a glaſs door; ſo that lady Grimſton and my mother were obliged to bring him that way.

Though

Though I was glad that the converſation was broke off, yet I could have wiſhed that I had firſt had an opportunity of throwing a little cold water on Mr. Arnold's *hopes*, leſt he ſhould have put too favourable an interpretation on the reception I gave him, and mention the thing to my mother, before I had time to ſpeak to her.

I was in ſome confuſion at their entering the room. Mr. Arnold had at that minute laid hold of one of my hands, and I had but juſt time to withdraw it, when the door flew open to give entrance to the two ladies and the good man: the latter lifting up both his hands, as if conſcious of having done ſomething wrong, with a good-humoured freedom, aſked pardon; but with a look that ſeemed to indicate, he thought the apology neceſſary both to Mr. Arnold and me. This diſconcerted me more; my mother ſmiled, and lady Grimſton drew up her long neck, and winked at the dean. I took up my hat, that lay in a window, without well-knowing what I did, and ſaid, I would wait on

them into the garden. Mr. Arnold followed my example; but looked at me, I do not know how—impertinently—as if he thought I did not diſlike him. I took one turn with them, and then ſlipped away under pretence of going in to dreſs. I ran directly into Mrs. Vere's room, and told her what had paſſed between Mr. Arnold and me. She laughed, and ſaid, ſhe could have told me long ago it would have come to that. I knew Mr. Arnold admired you, ſaid ſhe, the firſt time I ſaw you in his company; he is no contemptible conqueſt I can tell you. He aſſured my mother, that you were the only woman he ever ſaw in his life that had made an impreſſion on him; and I am inclined to believe him, for he is not a man of an amorous complexion; nor did I ever hear of his making his addreſſes to any one, though he might have his choice of the beſt fortunes, and the beſt families in the county; for the ladies, I muſt inform you, admire him exceedingly; and when you are known to be his choice, you will be the envy of all the young women

women in the country. I ſighed (I don't know why) and ſaid, I deſired not to create envy on that account. Mrs. Vere ſaid, why really Miſs Bidulph, if your heart is at liberty, I know of no man more worthy of it than Mr. Arnold; but perhaps (looking with a kind earneſtneſs on me) that may not be your caſe. I told her my heart was not engaged (as it really is not; for indeed, Cecilia, I do not think of Mr. Faulkland); but that I did not find in myſelf any great inclination towards Mr. Arnold. Oh, my dear, ſaid ſhe, if you find no diſinclination, it is enough. I married for love, yet I was far from being happy. The vexation that I occaſioned in my own and my huſband's family, was a counter-balance to the ſatisfaction of poſſeſſing the man I loved. Mr. Arnold, beſides being very amiable in his perſon, has good ſenſe and good temper; and if you marry him with nothing more than indifference, gratitude will ſoon produce love in ſuch a breaſt as yours. Were there any thing like averſion in

your heart, then indeed it would be criminal in you to accept of him.

Mrs. Vere delivered her ſentiments with ſuch a calm ſweetneſs, ſuch a diſintereſted ſincerity, that what ſhe ſaid made an impreſſion on me. We are apt, contrary as it may ſeem to reaſon, to be more wrought upon by the opinion and advice of young people like ourſelves, than by that of perſons whoſe experience certainly gives them a better right to form judgments: but we have a ſort of a natural repugnance to the being dictated to, even by thoſe who have an authority to do it; and as age gives a ſuperiority, every thing that comes from it carries a ſort of air of preſcribing, which we are wonderfully inclined to reject.

Had lady Grimſton ſaid this to me, it would have put me upon my guard, as ſuſpecting a deſign on my liberty of choice. Even my good mother might have been liſtened to on this ſubject not without uneaſineſs; though my duty to her would not ſuffer me to give her a moment's pain, unleſs I was ſure that my eternal as well as temporal happineſs was at ſtake.

I told

I told Mrs. Vere that I had no averſion to Mr. Arnold; on the contrary, that if I had a ſiſter, I ſhould wiſh her married to him. Now, my Cecilia, the miſchief of it is, there *can* be no reaſonable objection made to him: he is a very tolerable man; but I knew a man once that I liked better——but fie, fie upon him! I am ſure I ought not to like him, and therefore I will not. I am poſitive, if I were let alone, I ſhould be as happy as ever.

I told you I got a letter from my brother; he ſays in it, he has had one from Mr. Faulkland, who is now in your part of the world. He tells Sir George, 'that 'if my lady Bidulph will be ſo good as 'to ſee Miſs B. and converſe with her, 'he is not without hopes that ſhe may ſo 'far exculpate him, as to induce my lady 'to repeal his ſentence of baniſhment.' Sir George adds his own wiſhes for this, but ſays (to give you *his* words) he fears the wench will not be honeſt enough to do Faulkland juſtice——Juſtice! what can my brother mean by this? How ungenerous theſe men are, even the beſt of

them, in love matters! He knows the poor girl doats on her deſtroyer, and might perhaps take ſhame to *herſelf*, rather than throw as much blame on him as he deſerves. I think this is all the juſtice that can be expected from her; and how poor an extenuation would this make of his guilt! It would only add to the merit of *her* ſufferings, without leſſening his fault.

To what purpoſe then would it be? I know my mother's ſentiments already on that head. I would not ſhew Sir George's letter to her, he had ſaid ſo many ridiculous things about lady Grimſton in it, which I know would have offended her highly; otherwiſe, on account of Mr. Faulkland's paragraph, I ſhould have been glad ſhe had ſeen it.

September 12.——Ah, my ſiſter! my friend! What ſhall I do? Oh that officious lady Grimſton——What ill ſtar drove me to her houſe? Nothing would ſerve her but ſhe muſt know what Mr. Arnold ſaid to me in the drawing-room con-

conference; and how I had behaved. She made her inquiry before my mother and the dean, after I had left them in the garden. What could the man do? He had no reaſon to conceal what paſſed, and frankly owned he had made me an offer of his heart. Well, and how did miſs receive it? aſked lady Grimſton. With that modeſty and polite ſweetneſs that ſhe does every thing, anſwered Mr. Arnold. He could ſay no leſs, you know.

He thence took occaſion to apply particularly to my mother, apologizing at the ſame time for his not having done it before. What the ſelf-ſufficient creature added, I know not; for my mother, from whom I had this account, did not repeat all he ſaid; but it ſeems it was enough to make her imagine I had not heard him reluctantly, and accordingly ſhe gave him her permiſſion to win me and wear me.

I could cry for very vexation to be made ſuch a puppet of. This eclairciſſement I dreaded before I had time to explain myſelf to my mother. The beſt of women,

women, ſtill anticipating what I had to ſay, congratulated me on my extraordinary prudence, in not letting a childiſh, miſplaced attachment keep ſuch a hold on my heart, as to make me blind to the merits of a more deſerving object.

Dear madam, ſaid I, ſure Mr. Arnold did not ſay, that I had encouraged his addreſſes. Encouraged, my dear! why ſure the hearing, from a young lady of your education, is encouragement enough to a man of ſenſe.——I heard him with complaiſance, madam, becauſe I thought *that* due to him; but I had not time to tell him, that it was my wiſh to remain ſingle, at leaſt for ſome time. My mother looked ſurprized. "Sidney, this is not what I expected from you; I flattered myſelf you thought no longer of Mr. Faulkland."

She contracted her brow a little. Madam, I do not; indeed I think no more of him; but may I not be permitted to continue as I am?

Had you never had any engagement with Mr. Faulkland, anſwered my mother, I ſhould

I ſhould be far from urging you on this occaſion; but, circumſtanced as you now are, I think your honour is concerned.

Lady Grimſton has put your affair in ſuch a light to me, as I never conſidered it in before. How mortifying muſt the reflection be, my dear, to think that it may be ſaid Mr. Faulkland perhaps flew off, from ſome diſadvantageous circumſtance he diſcovered in regard to you. The world wants not envious malicious tongues enough to give it this turn. Your unlucky illneſs, and your brother's ill-timed aſſiduity in going ſo often to him when he was at Richmond, looks as if we had been endeavouring to recal him. Every body knows the marriage was almoſt concluded; and lady Grimſton, though ſhe thinks our reaſons for breaking it off were extremely cogent, yet as ſhe knows the world well, thinks it has not virtue enough to believe thoſe to be the true reaſons, and that it will be much more apt to put an invidious conſtruction on the affair, that may be very detrimental to you in your future proſpects. Theſe con-

conſiderations alone ought to determine you; but there is one ſtill of greater moment, which I hope, from the goodneſs of your heart, will have ſtill greater weight with you. That unfortunate young lady, who *ought* to be the wife of Mr. Faulkland if you were once put beyond the reach even of his moſt diſtant hope, would ſtand the better chance for having juſtice done to her; at leaſt it would leave him void of that pretence which he at firſt pleaded, and which probably he will continue to do, while you remain ſingle. Think ſeriouſly of the matter, my love. I ſhall only add, that Mr. Arnold is every way an unexceptionable match, and that your acceptance of him will be extremely agreeable to me; as, on the contrary, your refuſal will give an uneaſineſs to your indulgent mother, which ſhe never yet experienced from you.

She left me with theſe cruel words; cruel in their kindneſs—Oh! ſhe knows I am flexible by nature, and to *her* will be yielding as air. What can I do? My heart

heart is not in a diſpoſition to love—Yet, again and again I repeat it, Mr. Faulkland has no intereſt there. What he once had, he has loſt; but I cannot compel it to like and unlike, and like anew at pleaſure. Fain would I bring myſelf chearfully to conform to my mother's will, for I have no will of my own. I never knew what it was to have one, and never ſhall, I believe; for I am ſure I will not contend with a huſband.

I have told Mrs. Vere what my mother ſaid to me; ſhe is intirely of her mind; every body is combined againſt me; I am treated like a baby, that knows not what is fit for it to chooſe or to reject.

September 15.——I have been ſearching my heart, my dear Cecilia, to try if there remained a lurking particle of my former flame unextinguiſhed; a flame I call it, as we are allowed the metaphor; but it never roſe to *that*; it was but a ſingle ray, a gentle glow that juſt warmed my breaſt without ſcorching: what it might have ariſen to, I will not ſay; but

I have

I have the ſatisfaction to find, that the ſhort-lived fire is quite extinct, and the manſion is even chilled with cold.

This was a very neceſſary ſcrutiny before I would even entertain a thought of Mr. Arnold; and believe me, had I found it otherwiſe than I ſay, I would rather have hazarded my mother's diſpleaſure by owning the truth to her, than injure any man, by giving him my hand with an eſtranged heart.

I will acknowlege to you, my ſiſter, that it was not without a ſtruggle I reduced my mind to this frame. My heart (fooliſh thing!) induſtrious to perplex itſelf, would fain have ſuggeſted ſome palliating circumſtances in Mr. Faulkland's favour; but I forbid it to interpoſe. Trifler, ſaid I, let your guardian, your proper guide, judge and determine for you in this important cauſe, whereon ſo much of your future peace depends. It ſighed, but had the virtue to ſubmit; and I arraigned Faulkland before a little tribunal in my breaſt, where I would ſuffer reaſon only to preſide. The little felon,

love,

love, knocked at the door once or twice, but juſtice kept him out; and after a long (and I think a fair) trial, he was at length caſt; and in order to ſtrengthen my reſolves, and juſtify my mother's, as well as my own conduct, theſe are the arguments which I have deduced from the evidences againſt him.

If Mr. Faulkland feared the frailty of his virtue, why did he not fly when he was firſt alarmed with the knowlege of the lady's paſſion for him? If not for his own ſake, yet at leaſt for her's. If he could not return her love, was he not cruel in ſuffering her to feed a hopeleſs flame? But ſince his evil fate urged him on, and the unhappy girl loſt her honour, was he not bound to repair it? He had never ſeen me at that time, was under no perſonal engagements to me, and might eaſily have acquitted himſelf to my brother, from ſo juſtifiable a motive.

What if I had married him, ignorant of this ſecret, and it had afterwards come to my ears, how miſerable would it have made me, to think that I had ſtood between

tween an unfortunate young creature and her happineſs? for had Mr. Faulkland never heard of me, had he not been prejudiced in my favour, this young woman's beauty and innocence (which he acknowleges) might have then engaged his honeſt vows; the wicked aunt would not have been tempted to betray her truſt, nor he (ſhocking thought! whenever it recurs) to buy that favour he might have obtained on virtuous terms. His prior engagements to my brother was the fatal plea that undid them both! Had he not been furniſhed with this excuſe, her hopes might have ſupported her virtue; or, if ignorant of this, ſhe fell, what pretence could he offer, after the injury *was* done, for not fulfilling an obligation of ſo much more importance? I could not have ſuffered by not obtaining a man I never ſaw; Miſs B. is undone by loſing him: Yet his word to Sir George, the breach of which could have been attended with no ill conſequence, was to be preferred to an act of juſtice. This is that falſe honour upon which the men pique themſelves ſo much.

An

An innocent child ſtigmatized; an amiable woman abandoned to ſhame and grief! I thank heaven I made not myſelf acceſſary to this. *Had* I married Mr. Faulkland, *knowing* his fault, I could not ſay ſo, nor have blamed any thing but my own imprudence, if *I* in my turn found myſelf deſerted. Who knows but he might (after having bound me in chains) return to his neglected miſtreſs; and *that* love, which, when it would have been meritorious in him, he diſreliſhed, he might have purſued with eagerneſs when interdicted. This might have been the caſe. I believe you may remember an inſtance of it among our own acquaintance. Mr. Saunders, who refuſed a young lady for his bride, from an abſolute diſlike of her perſon, took uncommon pains to debauch her when ſhe became the wife of his friend. Had Mr. Faulkland ſo behaved, what a wretch would it have made me! You know I have not a grain of jealouſy in my compoſition, yet I am ſure a neglect of this kind would make me very miſerable.

You

You have not forgot, I believe, that about two years ago there was a match propoſed to my mother by the biſhop of B. between me and his nephew. The young man was heir to a good fortune, was reckoned handſome and accompliſhed, and I think he really was ſo: I was intirely free from prepoſſeſſions in favour of any one, and had no objection to him, but that I knew he had a moſt lamentably-vulnerable heart, for he had been in love with two or three women of my acquaintance. My mother mentioned him to me upon the good old prelate's recommendation, and I gave her this as my reaſon for diſliking the offer, which ſhe approved of ſo intirely, that the thing went no farther. Indeed I think that woman is a fool who riſques her contentment with one of a light diſpoſition. Marriage will not change mens natures; and it is not every one who has virtue or prudence enough to be reclaimed. Upon the whole, I am ſatisfied with my lot; and am ſure I could hear with pleaſure, that Mr. Faulkland was married to that Miſs B.

I wiſh

I wiſh I knew the other letters that compoſe her name.

September 16.——My mother aſked me to-day, Had I conſidered of what ſhe had been ſaying to me? I told her I had, and only begged a little more time. She kiſſed me with tears in her eyes. To be ſure, my dear, as much as you can reaſonably deſire. I know my Sidney is above trifling. Mrs. Vere was preſent when my mother left the room. Oh, Miſs Bidulph, ſaid ſhe, who would refuſe to gratify ſuch a parent as that? Had *my* mother condeſcended to treat me ſo, I am ſure ſhe could have wrought on me to do any thing ſhe liked, even though it had been repugnant to my inclination. Dear madam, I replied, how ſweetly you inforce my duty—Yes, I will obey that kindeſt, beſt of mothers. I believe I ſpoke this, tho' without intending it, in a tone that implied ſomething like making a merit of this conceſſion; for Mrs. Vere immediately anſwered, There's a good child! that, to oblige its mamma, will accept of

of a very handſome young gentleman, with a good eſtate, and one that many a girl in England would give her eyes for. I felt the rebuke; but turning it off with a ſmile, ſaid, but you forget, my dear, that I am not dying for him.

September 20.——How will you plume yourſelf on your ſagacity, Cecilia, when you read this account of my love, which you ſo wiſely foretold? I can tell you I am trying to like Mr. Arnold as faſt as I can; I make him ſing and play for this purpoſe from morning till night, for he is here every day, and all day. Lady Grimſton holds her head a quarter of a yard higher than ſhe did before; and looks, as who ſhould ſay, it was *I* that brought this about. The dean is as frolick as May-day upon it; for he is very fond of Mr. Arnold; but tells him he will not forgive him for robbing him of his ſecond wife; for ſuch he ſays he intended me. I think his daughter (a pretty girl of about ſeventeen) looks a little grave of late. I hope ſhe does not like Mr.

Mr. Arnold herſelf. I wiſh my mother would take it into her head that ſhe was in love with him, and that Mr. Arnold had promiſed to marry her; then ſhould I a ſecond time crown me with a willow garland. But there is no fear of this, or rather no hope.

Lady Grimſton has given my mother *ſuch* a character of Mr. Arnold, that if you will take her word for it, there is not a man like him in the world; and my mother firmly believes every ſyllable ſhe ſays. She told me to-day ſhe would write to Sir George, to give him an account of the matter, and deſire his advice. This is a compliment ſhe would not omit paying for any conſideration, though I know my brother's judgment has now loſt all credit with her; and that, let his opinion be what it will, ſhe is firmly reſolved on her new plan. Knowing as you do my mother's firmneſs when once ſhe is poſſeſſed with a thing, you will not wonder that I did not make attempts to alter her mind, which I knew would be fruitleſs. She likes Mr. Arnold prodigiouſly; ſhe

piques

piques herſelf on her ſkill in phyſiognomy, and ſays, if ſhe is deceived in this gentleman, ſhe will never again rely on that ſcience. Lady Grimſton is ſo fond of him, that I wonder ſhe did not marry him herſelf.

September 23.———We have received two letters from Sir George; one in anſwer to my mother's, the other to me. I will give them both to you: the following is a copy of that to my mother.

Madam,

I thank you for the honour you do me in aſking my advice, in regard to the propoſal of marriage you have received for my ſiſter; but I am intirely diſqualified from giving you any, as I am an abſolute ſtranger both to the perſon and character of the gentleman you mention; and know no more of him, than that I have heard there *is* ſuch a perſon, who has ſome eſtate in the county where you now are.

As you are abſolute miſtreſs of your daughter's will, as well as of her perſon, I ſhall

I ſhall not preſume to interfere in this nice point. If the marriage is not *already* agreed upon (which may be the caſe, notwithſtanding the compliment you do me the favour to pay me) I think it would be generous in you to ſee Miſs B. and hear what ſhe has to ſay, before you proceed farther; but in this, as in every thing elſe, your own diſcretion muſt guide you.

I am, madam,

Your affectionate ſon,

and moſt obedient ſervant,

London, *Sept.* 22. GEORGE BIDULPH.

My mother was exceedingly diſpleaſed with this letter. She ſaid Sir George had a haughtineſs in him that was very offenſive to her. I have acquitted myſelf in applying to him, and ſhall give myſelf no farther trouble about him or his opinion. As for Miſs B. I think ſhe can hardly be under a neceſſity of coming to town as yet, and that affair may keep cold, for I have but little curioſity to hear what the poor ſoul may be prompted to

lay, as I am ſure I ſhall be time enough to afford her any aſſiſtance ſhe may ſtand in need of. This was the whole of her obſervation. My brother's letter to me is as follows:

Dear Sidney,

I received with concern (though I own not with ſurprize) an account from my mother of a new treaty of marriage that is on foot between you and a Mr. Arnold, of whom I know nothing. Inſtead of congratulating you on this occaſion, I cannot help condoling with you; for I have a better opinion of your heart than to ſuppoſe it can have ſo ſoon renounced poor Faulkland. I do not reproach you for your acquieſcence in giving him up: I *know* you could not do otherwiſe; but why in the name of precipitancy are you to be hurried into wedlock already? You went into the country to recover your health, I thought; prithee, how comes this new huſband in your way? I know, child, it is not of your ſeeking, and do from my heart pity you.

I would

I would by no means have you guilty of a breach of duty to our mother: but for heaven's ſake, why don't you try your influence over her, to have this ſudden ſcheme of matrimony ſuſpended, till ſhe ſees and talks to this girl that Faulkland refers her to? If the wench owns that he was not to blame ſo much as ſhe herſelf was, and relinquiſhes all pretenſions to him, don't you think ſhe (my mother I mean) would in that caſe remain bound in honour to yield you to his prior claim?

Indeed, Sidney, I muſt blame you for this part of your conduct; it looks like a ſtrange inſenſibility in you.

I know you will urge your perfect ſubmiſſion to your mother's will; and I know too, that *will* is as abſolute as that of an Eaſtern monarch. I therefore repeat it, I do not mean to reproach you with your compliance, but I am vexed to the heart, and muſt give it vent.

I ſee plainly that old piece of formality, lady Grimſton's infernal ſhrivelled paw in all this. For my mother of herſelf,

I am ſure, would not have thought of diſpoſing of you, without your liking, ſo ſoon after an affair that had created you ſo much uneaſineſs, unleſs it had been ſuggeſted to her by ſomebody. Prithee tell me what ſort of a man this Arnold really is, for I do not depend on the partial repreſentations I have had of him.

I wiſh Miſs B. were come to town, but ſhe is not yet arrived. I inquired for her of Faulkland's houſekeeper, by the name of Jefferis. The woman is at the houſe at Putney waiting to receive her, but does not know how ſoon ſhe will come. Would ſhe had been buried before Faulkland ſaw her!

I ſhall expect a letter from you ſoon. How comes it that you never mentioned Mr. Arnold to me in any that you have writ? But I excuſe you, and am

Your affectionate brother,

London, Sept. 22. G. B.

You ſee this is Sir George himſelf, my dear; a mixture of petulancy and indelicacy. There is one thing in him, however,

ever, commendable; his ſteady adherence to his friend's intereſts. You find how impoſſible for me it is to ſhew ſuch a letter to my mother: by his ſtrange unguarded manner of writing, which he does not conſider, he defeats his own purpoſes; for if any uſe could be made of that part of his letter relative to Miſs B. I could not ſhew my mother part, without letting her ſee the whole: but that is not to be done; and I can only thank my good fortune that I received this, and the laſt letter from him, without her knowlege.

I will now give you my anſwer to this letter, which I wrote by the return of the poſt.

Dear Brother,

I thank you for your condolements, but can aſſure you my heart is not in ſuch a ſituation as to require any. I own I had all the eſteem for Mr. Faulkland which I thought his merit deſerved. Duty to my good mother, and an undeniable blemiſh in his character, firſt wrought a change in my ſentiments towards him:

my own peace of mind now requires me to improve that change into indifference.

You do me juſtice in ſuppoſing that I ſhould never think of ſeeking a huſband; and you have formed as right a judgment in regard to lady Grimſton's being the promoter of this union. As for Mr. Arnold, though perhaps (had I never known your friend) he might not have been the man of my choice, yet have I no diſlike to him. I believe him to be a very worthy gentleman; and that my mother has not been partial in her repreſentations. I am ſure, at leaſt, ſhe has ſaid nothing of him but what ſhe has ſeen or been told, and has good reaſon to believe.

I wiſh, dear brother, you had writ with more caution, that I might have laid before my mother what you ſaid in relation to Miſs B. It may have its weight with me, though I cannot anſwer for its having any with her. Do you forget her having told me, that ſhe conceived a ſort of horror at the thoughts of my marrying Mr. Faulkland? She cannot but be

ſenſible,

ſenſible, that Miſs B. is not without her ſhare of blame in that affair which has ſo perplexed us all. But you know too that does not exculpate Mr. Faulkland. The young lady's relinquiſhing her hopes (for a claim I think ſhe does not make) would only the more excite my mother's compaſſion, and intereſt her in her favour. To ſum up the whole in one word, my mother is reſolved, and you yourſelf acknowlege that her will is abſolute. She has uſed the moſt irreſiſtible argument to obtain my conſent, *viz.* that it would make *her* happy. Spare then, my dear brother, unkind reflections on any part of my behaviour; for I am determined to purſue, through life, that rule of conduct which I have hitherto invariably adhered to; I mean, that of preferring to my own the happineſs of thoſe who are moſt dear to me.

I am, &c.

September 25. —— Mr. Arnold has ſo many advocates here, that his intereſt can not fail of being promoted. Mrs. Ward admires

admires him; the Dean commends him; my mother praiſes him; lady Grimſton extols him to the ſkies. No one is ſilent, but the young girl that I mentioned to you before; ſhe only colours and hangs down her head when he is ſpoken of. I really begin to fear that the poor thing loves him; but he never made any addreſſes to her, and I hope does not ſuſpect it.

Things are now gone ſo far, that my mother and lady Grimſton talked to-day of ſettlements. Mr. Arnold receives but twelve hundred pounds a year from his eſtate; his brother's widow, as I have already told you, having a jointure upon it of three hundred pounds a year. She lives intirely in London, and is, I am told, a very imprudent woman, and not at all eſteemed by the family. The elder Mr. Arnold and ſhe were married ſeveral years, but never had a child; the laſt two years of his life his wife and he lived ſeparate, her conduct having given room for ſome ſuſpicions very injurious to her huſband's honour.

The

The Arnold eſtate was originally a very conſiderable one, but has been diſſipated by the extravagance of the ſucceſſive poſſeſſors. What remains, however, is, quite clear, and is likely to be kept ſo by the good management of the preſent owner. His late brother was exceedingly remiſs in his affairs, and ſpent moſt of his time in London; and if it had not been for Mr. Arnold, the manſion-houſe would have fallen to the ground; but his brother lent it to him, and he kept it in repair for his own uſe, as he is fond of the place: though he has a pretty houſe in Kent, belonging to another eſtate of about three hundred pounds a year, which came to him by his mother, for he is the ſon of a ſecond marriage. And this, till his brother's death, was the whole of his income; but he is ſo good an œconomiſt, that he always made a genteeler figure on his three hundred pounds a year, than his brother did on twelve.

My mother, who you know is integrity itſelf, thinks that I ought not to have more ſettled on me than the widow of Mr.

Arnold's brother had, whoſe fortune was ſuperior to mine. Mr. Arnold makes a much handſomer propoſal; lady Grimſton is for laying hold of it. The dean was for ſtriking a medium. I do not care how they ſettle it; but I fancy my mother will have her own way in this.

She purpoſes going to town next week, that the wedding———(bleſs me! whoſe wedding is it that I am talking of ſo coolly?) well—that it may be celebrated in her own houſe. This to be ſure will ſend Sir George directly out of it. I cannot help it; I am born to give, and to receive vexation.

Mr. Arnold ſpeaks of taking a houſe in London, where my mother is to have an apartment whenever ſhe chooſes to be in town. This is a pleaſing circumſtance to me; and ſhe likewiſe propoſes our being ſometimes with her at Sidney Caſtle. That is a proſpect which loſes much of its charms, by the reflection that my dear Cecilia is not there.

October 1.———All preliminaries are ſettled.

ſettled. There has been a fuſs with parchments this week paſt. My mother has carried her point in regard to the jointure; and has made choice of that little eſtate in Kent to be ſettled on me, as it is a complete three hundred pounds a year, detached intirely from the reſt, and has a pretty houſe on it. This was all ſhe would accept of, though, to do Mr. Arnold juſtice, he would have been much more liberal; but, my mother ſays, a ſingle woman, bred in retirement as I have been, who cannot live on that, does not deſerve to live at all; adding, that as the eſtate was already ſubject to one jointure, and the widow ſo young a woman; if it ſhould be alſo my misfortune to become one early, a great part of the fortune would be ſwallowed by dowagers, and the heir not have enough to ſupport his rank.

October 2.——This morning my mother, lady Grimſton, the dean, and Mr. Arnold (who is the idol of them all) took a rumbling together in the old coach, by way of taking the air, in a duſty road; and

and what do you think was the reſult of their deliberations in this jaunt? Why truly lady Grimſton, proud of her handy-work, would needs ſee it accompliſhed; and nothing will ſerve her, but I muſt be married at her houſe. My mother oppoſed it at firſt; but the Dean ſeconded the propoſal, that he might have (as he expreſſed himſelf) the ſatisfaction of contributing *himſelf* to make Mr. Arnold happy; and Mr. Arnold (audaciouſly expecting, I ſuppoſe, that this would haſten the ceremony) joined his intreaties ſo effectually, that my mother was obliged to yield.

What a tormenting old woman is this lady Grimſton! I hoped, at leaſt, for the reſpite of a month, by getting to London. I thought firſt to have delayed the time of our going to town, and then to have faddled away a good while longer under pretence of preparations; though there is but little room for that now, as all my fineries, deſtined I thought to another purpoſe, are lying quietly in my trunks at home. But then one might have

have contrived many little occaſions of delay. There was a houſe to be fixed upon, and I had twenty things to do; and, as my mother ſays, many things fall out between the cup and the lip. But all my expectations are blown away, and I have but one poor fortnight given me to recollect my ſcattered thoughts, when they are all to be centered in Mr. Arnold. I am not merry, my Cecilia, but I am determined not to appear ſad; neither am I ſo; I hope I have no reaſon.

My mother purpoſes writing again to Sir George, to deſire his preſence at my marriage. I hope he will behave reſpectfully to every one here, if he ſhould come.

October 5.——Mr. Arnold has writ to town, to beſpeak a new chariot; he will do nothing in regard to the houſe, till I am on the ſpot to pleaſe myſelf. I intend ſending Patty to town to bring me down my bridal trappings.

Mr. Arnold has given ſome neceſſary orders for the new decking of his perſon, as well as ſome of the apartments in the old

old manſion-houſe, which ſeem a little to want refurniſhing; moſt of the goods having been inhabitants there ſince the time of his great grandfather.

October 9——My mother's laſt letter to Sir George has produced the following anſwer, which he ſent by Patty, when ſhe returned down here with my cloaths.

Madam,

I am ſorry I cannot accept of the invitation you favour me with, to be preſent at my ſiſter's nuptials. Some affairs in Wilſhire require my immediate attendance; and I had ſettled matters before I received your ſummons, ſo as to ſet out as on this day. I wiſh you all imaginable ſatisfaction in your new ſon-in-law, and my ſiſter abundance of happineſs in her ſpouſe.

I am, Madam, *&c.*

London, Oct. 8.

I am glad Sir George does not come down? I am ſure if he did, his behaviour would

would be ſuch, as would render him no very acceptable gueſt at Grimſton-hall.

A week, but a ſhort week, to come, before my fate is irrevocably fixed; or revocable only by the hand of death! This reflection, ſolemn as it is, does not alarm me; becauſe, after again calling my heart to the ſtricteſt account, I think I *can* pronounce it intirely free. Mr. Arnold will ſoon have an indiſputable right to it; and it is my firm purpoſe to uſe my utmoſt endeavours to give him intire poſſeſſion of it. He every day gains upon my eſteem. If his talents are not ſo glittering as I have ſeen ſome others poſſeſſed of, he is nevertheleſs maſter of an exceedingly good underſtanding, which a ſort of diffidence in his manner does not ſuffer him to ſhew at once to the beſt advantage. His temper is extremely ſweet, and he ſeems to have an openneſs of heart (when he throws off a little ſhyneſs which he has contracted) that is exceedingly engaging. His love for me appears as fervent as I believe it ſincere; and I ſhould

be

be ungrateful not to do my utmoſt to return it.

October 14.—— How precipitate has been my fortune? Twice within theſe three months have I been almoſt at the eve of my intended nuptials. Thoſe which *were* to have been, I thought as certain as thoſe which are *now* to be ſolemnized within two days. Who knows what may ſtill happen to fruſtrate our preſent deſigns?—No—there is not another Miſs B. to interpoſe. Mr. Arnold ſeems to be one of thoſe who are born to paſs quietly through life. He has already attained to the age of thirty, without one event ever happening to him, but ſuch as happen to every man every day. May no future ſtorm ever interrupt his or my tranquillity; for they will ſoon be one and the ſame thing.

October 16.——The die is thrown, my Cecilia, and thy Sidney is the wife of Mr. Arnold! This day we were married; the good Dean joined our hands, and his daughter

daughter was one of my bride-maids. The poor girl was taken ill during the ceremony, and was obliged to leave the church, which has confirmed me in my ſuſpicions—Oh, how I pity her! I believe indeed ſhe only feigned illneſs for an excuſe to retire. Mrs. Vere went out with her; but ſhe would not ſuffer her to attend her home. She promiſed to dine with us, if ſhe ſhould be better; and ſo ſhe did, and ſeemed chearful and pretty well; but I thought ſhe looked as if ſhe had been crying. She made my heart ach—but I am in hopes it is but a ſlight wound; ſhe is exceedingly lively, and I dare ſay will ſoon get the better of it.

Lady Grimſton was downright tireſome with her compliments; and preached an hour long about the duty of children to their parents; and how good a wife that woman was likely to make, who had always been exemplary in her filial obedience. Ah! lady Grimſton, thought I, by what I have heard of you, you did not ſeem to number obedience among wife-like virtues in your own caſe, though you

can

can preach it up to others. But I knew this ſermon was chiefly intended for poor Mrs. Vere's uſe. My mother was all kindneſs and complacency. She ſeemed ſo delighted, that I rejoiced in having had it in my power to give her ſo much happineſs. Lady Grimſton did the honours of her houſe on this occaſion with great magnificence, and I believe I need not tell you, with moſt exquiſite decorum. Indeed this wedding was conducted with ſuch a decent feſtivity, ſo rationally on all ſides, and ſuch a comfortable privacy, that I was not half ſo much ſhocked as I expected to have been.

We have no company here beſides the family of the houſe, my dear good old Dean, his lady and daughter, one young lady more, and a relation of Mr. Arnold's; a gentleman who came from London on purpoſe to be preſent on this (as it is called) joyful occaſion.

We ſhall leave this houſe to-morrow, Mr. Arnold and I, I mean. I am to be put into poſſeſſion of the old manſion of Arnold-abbey. My mother is to continue with

with lady Grimſton a week or a fortnight longer, and then ſhe goes to London, on no other call, as ſhe ſays, but to ſee or adminiſter comfort to poor Miſs B. who ſhe ſuppoſes will be by that time come to her retreat.

I believe I ſhall remain in the country while the weather continues pleaſant, but am not yet determined.

October 17.——We took leave of lady Grimſton this morning, or rather of her houſe; for her ladyſhip, my dear mother, and all the good folks that were our gueſts at Grimſton-hall, are to dine with us to-day at Arnold-abbey. I deſired I might be permitted to go home without any parade, and in as private a manner as poſſible; for you know how I hate a buſtle. Mr. Arnold very obligingly indulged me in this requeſt, and conducted my ſweet Mrs. Vere and me home in his own coach, at eight of the clock this morning. I found every thing in exact order at Arnold-abbey. The houſe is very ſpacious and convenient, though very old-faſhioned,

faſhioned. Some of the rooms however are newly fitted up, perfectly neat and handſome. The ſervants are orderly and well-behaved, and every thing ſeems to be exactly well regulated. You may be ſure I have taken my own Patty home with me; I intend to conſtitute her houſe-keeper, and give her an additional ſalary for her additional trouble. Mr. Arnold had nobody in that capacity before, as his houſhold had not been ſettled ſince the acquiſition of his fortune, and he reſerved the chooſing of ſo material a domeſtic to me; but as I do not love to multiply ſervants, and know that Patty is very capable of the place, I ſhall take no other.

October 21.——Viſitors ſtill in abundance: all the gentry in the neighbourhood for ſome miles about have been to pay us their compliments; at leaſt, I hope by this time they have *all* been here, for we have not had a minute to ourſelves theſe three days. It will take me up ten to return them, as many of the families live at a good diſtance from hence.

Mr.

Mr. Arnold, whoſe mourning has been laid aſide ſince our wedding-day, ſeems to have a very good taſte in dreſs; he is perfectly well ſhaped, and appears to great advantage in colours; in ſhort he is more amiable than I thought he was. It is with great pleaſure that I obſerve my young acquaintance, on whoſe heart I feared Mr. Arnold had made an impreſſion, has recovered her uſual vivacity. With people extremely full of ſpirits, love is not apt to ſink very deep, or laſt long, when it does not meet with a return.

October 30.——My mother ſets out for London to-morrow, and Mr. Arnold has propoſed to me, that he and I ſhould accompany her. He ſays, he wants to look out for a houſe, and ſhould like to fix in one before the winter advances; and that we may take up our abode at my mother's till our houſe is ready for us. My mother is charmed at this propoſal: ſhe dreads the thoughts of parting with me; and as ſhe intends going (after a con-

a convenient ſtay in London) down to Sidney Caſtle, if I remain here, our ſeparation muſt be immediate. I know this is Mr. Arnold's kind reaſon for deſiring me to go; he thinks I ſhall be leſs affected at parting with my mother, when in the midſt of the various ſcenes which London affords, than I ſhould be if I were to continue here. He gives not this for a reaſon, but I know it is his true one; for he is not fond of London himſelf, eſpecially at a ſeaſon of the year when the country is ſo much more agreeable. I thanked him for this mark of his tenderneſs, and am determined to go.

October 31.——Once more returned to London in very good ſpirits, after a ſtay of little more than two months in Eſſex, in which time ſo material and unexpected a change has been made in my condition.

Lady Grimſton took a moſt affectionate leave of my mother, and aſked her, with more tenderneſs than I thought her capable

pable of, How many ages it would be before they ſhould meet again? As for Mr. Arnold and me, ſhe conſiders us as her neighbours. The Dean pleaſes himſelf with that expectation too; and the dear Mrs. Vere, who ſhed tears at bidding me adieu, promiſes herſelf the happineſs (as ſhe kindly expreſſed herſelf) of ſpending many delightful days with me next ſummer. She ſet out on her return to her own houſe, at the ſame time that we left ours to go to town.

My brother is ſtill in Wiltſhire; but I find he did not leave town at the time he mentioned in his letter to my mother, nor for ſome days after. This Patty learnt from the ſervants; but I hope it will not come to my mother's ears, for ſhe would take it extremely ill of him.

Mr. Arnold, for the firſt time, mentioned, that he was very much diſappointed in not having had the honour of ſeeing Sir George at his houſe in the country; but he hoped, when he came to town, his brother and he ſhould make up for this, by being the more together. I wiſh Sir

George

George may behave as he ought to this deſerving brother. Mr. Arnold little imagines how much he was an enemy to the match, and much leſs his reaſon for it. I ſhould be very ſorry Mr. Arnold were to know how near I was being married to another man; it might give a delicate mind pain, leſt there ſhould remain any traces of this former attachment in the breaſt of a woman he loves; but I hope there is no danger of his hearing of it; certainly no one would be ſo indiſcreet as to mention it to him. Mr. Arnold has lived chiefly in the country, and may never have heard of Mr. Faulkland, as he was ſo ſhort a time returned from his travels, on which he had been abſent more than five years; and as he is now out of the kingdom, probably he will not be ſpoken of. I have begged of my mother, who is naturally communicative, never to name Mr. Faulkland to Mr. Arnold, and have given my reaſons for deſiring this. She ſays, ſhe thinks it would be better to tell him the whole affair at once; but I cannot agree with her

in

in that opinion; and have at laſt prevailed on her to promiſe me ſhe will not ſpeak of it.

November 2.——My mother drove out in my new chariot to-day (a very fine gay one it is) and went to Putney to inquire after Miſs B. by the name of Mrs. Jefferis. She ſoon found the houſe, a very neat box, with a pretty garden behind it. The door was opened by a ſervant maid; and my mother being told the lady was at home, ſent in her name; and was immediately conducted up ſtairs into a very elegant little dreſſing-room, where the lady was ſitting at her toilet; and Mr. Faulkland's houſekeeper (whom my mother had ſeen before) aſſiſting to dreſs her head. On my mother's entering the room, Miſs B. roſe off her chair, and ſoon diſcovered by her ſhape (for ſhe was without her ſtays) that it was high time for her to ſeek a place of concealment. The houſekeeper immediately withdrew; and the young lady ſeemed in the utmoſt confuſion; my mother ſays, ſhe herſelf

was at a loſs how to begin the converſation, but Miſs B. relieved her, and ſpoke firſt. She thanked her for the honour ſhe did her by ſo charitable a viſit, which, ſhe ſaid, Mr. Faulkland had long ago made her hope for; and which ſhe muſt conſider as the greateſt conſolation in her preſent unhappy circumſtances.

My mother placed herſelf by her. Madam, ſaid ſhe, Mr. Faulkland made it a point with me before he left England, that I ſhould ſee you, and afford you all the aſſiſtance in my power, or that you ſhould ſtand in need of. You ſeem to be commodiouſly ſituated here, and I underſtand have a very careful good woman to attend you.

I have ſo, madam, ſhe anſwered; but the moſt material circumſtance is wanting to my relief: Mr. Faulkland!—He is not here: Tears ſtarted into her eyes as ſhe ſpoke. You were appriſed of his abſence, ſaid my mother, before you came to town. I was, madam, and with the cauſe of it; ſhe hung down her head, and was ſilent.

My

My mother reaſſumed the converſation. She told her, ſhe thought it a moſt providential diſcovery, that had given her the knowlege of Mr. Faulkland's ill behaviour time enough to prevent his marriage with her daughter; aſſuring her, ſhe would not, for the univerſe, have had me the wife of a man under ſuch ties, as ſhe muſt conſider Mr. Faulkland to be. Miſs B. brightened up a little upon my mother's ſaying this. Did Mr. Faulkland ever tell you, madam, how the unhappy affair happened? My mother told her, ſhe knew not particulars; that ſhe had been referred to her for a full explanation; that Mr. Faulkland had always endeavoured to excuſe himſelf, and went ſo far as to ſay, He was ſure the lady herſelf would acquit him in a great meaſure. Ah, madam! Miſs B. cried, and ſhook her head. 'Tis as I expected, ſaid my mother; Mr. Faulkland is an ungenerous man. A young lady of your modeſt appearance, I am ſure, he muſt have taken more pains to ſeduce, than he will acknowlege. Miſs B. bluſhed exceedingly—

Oh! madam, you have a charitable, generous heart, I was *indeed* ſeduced. I knew it, replied my mother. Did he promiſe to marry you? She coloured deeper than before. I will not accuſe him of that, madam. My mother proceeded; You have a relation, madam; I underſtand ſhe was acceſſary to your misfortune. Yes, the barbarous woman, anſwered the lady; ſhe was the contriver of my deſtruction; and if I could have avoided it, I would never have ſeen her face again. Tears of grief and indignation againſt burſt from her eyes. Have comfort, madam, ſaid my mother, all may end well yet. I can have no hopes, anſwered Miſs B. Mr. Faulkland flies me, you ſee, nor can I ever expect to recover his heart, ſince ſo charming a young lady, as I hear Miſs Bidulph is, has poſſeſſion of it; and though your goodneſs diſappointed him in his late views, he may not yet deſpair. I found by this, continued my mother, that Miſs B. knew nothing of your being married, and made haſte to tell her. I never ſaw joy ſo viſible

viſible in a countenance. She claſped her hands together, Dear madam! what do you tell me? How you revive my drooping heart! then I am not *quite* hopeleſs, there is a *poſſibility* in my favour.

She then aſked my mother, if Mr. Faulkland had acquainted her with her real name, or that of her relation. My mother, who had once or twice called her by the name of Jefferis, aſſured her he had not. That was generous in him, ſaid ſhe; he *can* be generous in *ſome* points. But I have no reaſon to conceal it from ſo prudent and worthy a lady as you are; my real name is Burchell; that of my cruel relation I will forbear to mention, out of reſpect to my good uncle, whoſe wife ſhe is. Mr. Faulkland, ſhe added, left a bill of five hundred pounds with his houſekeeper, to provide every thing for me that I ſhould want; with aſſurances that he would take the tendereſt care of——the poor young creature heſitated, and could proceed no farther; but my mother ſaid ſhe underſtood her meaning. They had a good deal more diſcourſe: my mother promiſed to ſee

her often during her confinement, and took her leave.

She tells me, ſhe is exceedingly pretty, and has ſuch an air of innocence and ſimplicity, as very much engages one in her favour.

I have ſet down this whole converſation, with every other particular, exactly as my mother related it.

She, who has a moſt circumſtantial memory, repeated it word for word, and I, from a cuſtom of throwing upon paper every thing that occurs to me, have habituated myſelf to retain the minuteſt things.

I know not, my dear, whether you will be of my opinion; but I cannot help thinking, that there was ſomething like art in Miſs Burchell's behaviour, far from that candour which Mr. Faulkland ſeemed to expect from her. My mother mentioned the *pains* that ſhe ſuppoſed had been taken to *ſeduce* her; her deep bluſh at this hint, makes me ſuſpect that her anſwer was not dictated by ſincerity. She ſaw my mother was not acquainted with particulars, and that ſhe was willing to

paſs

paſs a favourable judgment on her fault; it looks to me as if ſhe laid hold of this prejudice—and yet ſhe *owned* that Mr. Faulkland had never promiſed to marry her—I know not what to think; but there appears to me, upon the whole, ſomething evaſive and diſingenuous in her conduct. My mother, who is all openneſs and integrity, ſaw it not in this light. But be it as it may, it is no longer of conſequence to me, which was moſt to blame, the gentleman or the lady: Miſs Burchell is certainly the injured perſon; perhaps I too may have wronged her in my ſurmiſes; if I have, I beg her pardon; the obſervations I have made on her behaviour are only en paſſant, and I do from my heart wiſh Mr. Faulkland would make her his wife. You may perceive, from what I have told you, how little this interview was likely to produce in Mr. Faulkand's favour, had it even been brought about ſooner. My mother is now more than ever confirmed in her opinion, that the poor young creature has been deceived; and ſhe prays, that

Mr. Faulkland may not be overtaken with a judgment, which ſhe thinks nothing but his marrying the girl can avert.

November 10.——We have at length fixed upon a houſe to our liking, a handſome convenient one in St. James's-ſtreet. We are preparing to get it furniſhed as faſt as we can, that we may go into it; for if my brother ſhould come to town, I know *our* being with my mother will be an objection to his lodging in her houſe: this I ſhould be ſorry for, as ſhe told him he might make uſe of it while it remained in her hands.

November 15.——Thank my ſtars! I have got over the fatigue of receiving and paying a ſecond round of bridal viſits, and I am really ſo tired of it, that uninviting as the ſeaſon is, I could wiſh myſelf in quiet at Arnold-Abbey; but I cannot think of leaving London while my mother continues in it, and ſhe is now reſolved to do ſo till Miſs Burchell, or rather,

rather, on this occaſion, Mrs. Jefferis, is brought to-bed. You can't imagine how ſolicitous ſhe is about her; every time ſhe ſees her ſhe ſeems more and more pleaſed with her. I am very glad it has happened ſo, for the poor young woman's ſake; my mother is as warm in her attachments as in her reſentments. She viſits her almoſt every ſecond day; for the poor thing it ſeems is ill at preſent, and can't leave her chamber. She tells me ſhe is extremely melancholy, and ſeems much to dread the approaching hour. I greatly honour my good mother for her humanity towards her: in her terrifying ſituation, ſhe muſt want the tenderneſs of a well bred as well as a ſenſible friend; for it muſt be a melancholy thing, in ſuch circumſtances, to have no one about her but ſervants, and thoſe ſtrangers too.

She told my mother, that her altered looks, and frequent ſickneſſes, gave her aunt (who was privy to the cauſe of it all) a pretence for aſking her uncle's permiſſion for miſs to go to Bath, which ſhe told him would do her more good

than any thing. He conſented, and ſuppoſed ſhe was actually gone thither under the care of a lady, whom her aunt named, who was really going there in order to ſettle for life, and to whoſe houſe ſhe went for a day or two to give a colour to this ſtory. Her aunt contrived that ſhe ſhould not take any ſervant with her; giving it for a reaſon, that as ſhe might be as well attended by the lady's ſervants with whom ſhe lodged, and be conſidered by her as one of the family, a maid would only be an unneceſſary incumbrance. She added, that her uncle was ſo afflicted with the gout, that he never ſtirred abroad, and ſaw very little company, ſo that it was not likely he ſhould ever be undeceived.

November 20.——We have juſt received a very odd piece of news, that I own has a little alarmed me. It is, that the widow of Mr. Arnold's brother is found to be with child. There was no mention of this at the time her huſband died, nor indeed any cauſe to ſuſpect it; but

but the ſtrongeſt preſumptions in the world to the contrary, as her huſband and ſhe lived a-part. It has not been even whiſpered, till ſince our arrival in town. The lady pretends that ſhe was not conſcious of it herſelf till within this fortnight; yet her huſband has been dead four months. This I am told is very poſſible, though not very common. She has herſelf wrote a letter to Mr. Arnold, to inform him of it; at the ſame time declaring, that ſhe and her late huſband had been reconciled a little before his death; and that, had he recovered, ſhe was to have lived with him again. All this is very ſtrange. The elder Mr. Arnold killed himſelf with exceſſive drinking. His death approached him by ſlow degrees; but as he could never be perſuaded to think it near, he took not the leaſt care either of his ſpiritual or temporal concerns. His brother was in the country when he was ſeized with his laſt illneſs, which he had precipitated by ſome extravagant exceſs. He was almoſt at the laſt extremity before he could be prevailed on to let a phyſician attend

attend him, or ſuffer his brother to be ſent for. In regard to the latter, he told thoſe about him, that as he was his heir, of courſe he had made no will. He mentioned not his wife. The jointure which had been ſettled on her, he allowed her for a ſeparate maintenance. They had for a long time purſued ſeparate pleaſures, and none of his friends knew that they had ever met, or ſo much as ſeen one another from the time they parted. My Mr. Arnold arrived in town juſt time enough to cloſe his brother's eyes; he was ſpeechleſs when he came, and expired in leſs than an hour after he entered his chamber.

As his wife had been very obnoxious to the family, there was little notice taken of her by them, more than what common forms require. She ſeemed as indifferent about the death of her huſband, as ſhe had been towards him in his life-time; and did not then hint a word of this reconciliation between them, or of her having had an interview with him. I am told, ſhe is a very weak, as well as a very looſe woman;

man; and Mr. Arnold thinks ſhe has got into the hands of ſome deſigning perſon. However that matter may be, it is a ſerious affair; and he deſigns to take the opinion of an eminent lawyer upon it. My poor dear mother is frightened ſadly. If this child ſhould make its appearance in the world time enough to prove the poſſibility of its being the offspring of the late Mr. Arnold, ſhe ſays, it muſt be conſidered by the law as his heir, notwithſtanding the huſband and wife lived apart. Mr. Arnold laughs, or affects to laugh at this; we ſhall, however, wait with patience till the lady is brought to-bed.

November 25.——Our houſe is intirely fitted up, and we ſhall remove into it this evening; my mother chooſes to continue in her own, though Mr. Arnold preſſes her to accept of an apartment in ours; but we ſhall be near neighbours, and ſhe does not like to change.

We have received the opinion of our lawyers, who tell us, that in caſe the child ſhould be born within ſuch a

period of time, as to give colour to its claim, yet the lady muſt prove her aſſertion, in regard to the pretended meeting between her and her huſband; which it is imagined is not in her power to do; and her indifferent character, together with ſeveral favourable circumſtances which Mr. Arnold has on his ſide, makes them quite ſanguine in their expectations of overturning her claim. We are, however, likely to be engaged in a diſagreeable law-ſuit; but as Mr. Arnold ſeems perfectly eaſy about the iſſue of it, I will make myſelf ſo too.

December 10.——I am more and more reconciled to my lot, my dear Cecilia, every day that I live. Mr. Arnold's aſſiduity and tenderneſs towards me deſerve the gratefulleſt return my heart can make him; and I am convinced it is not neceſſary to be paſſionately in love with the man we marry, to make us happy. Conſtancy, good ſenſe, and a ſweet temper, muſt form a baſis for a durable felicity. The two latter I am ſure Mr. Arnold poſſeſſes; Oh,

Oh, may I never experience his want of the former; I hope my own conduct will for ever enſure to me his love. That can only ſecure the tranquillity of my future days.

December 11.——My brother arrived in town laſt night; and came this morning in company with my mother (and I am ſure at her requeſt) to make us a formal viſit. My kind Mr. Arnold received him with tenderneſs; Sir George was coldly polite. He owned, however, to my mother, upon her aſking him his opinion of his brother-in-law, that he ſeemed to be a *good clever ſort of fellow.* I wiſh I could cultivate a friendſhip between them; it will not be Mr. Arnold's fault if there is not; but Sir George, you know, is not of a very pliant diſpoſition.

He aſked my mother, when they were alone, Whether ſhe had yet ſeen Miſs B. or Mrs. Jefferis (for he knew her by no other name) and what ſhe had to ſay for herſelf? My mother told him, he had better not touch upon that ſtring. I will be

hanged, replied Sir George, if the artful young baggage has not impoſed upon you. My mother, who is always angry at having her ſagacity called in queſtion, told Sir George he was rude, and ſhe ſhould give him no ſatisfaction on that head. My brother anſwered, as it was *now* of no conſequence what the wench affirmed or denied, he had no farther curioſity about her. My mother called him a bear, and ſo the enquiry ended.

December 20.—— I congratulate you, my ſiſter, my friend, my ever beloved Cecilia. Happy! happy may you be in your nuptials! but in the midſt of my joy for your being ſo nobly and worthily beſtowed, ſelf-love forces a ſigh from me. I have loſt the pleaſing hope of ſeeing you at the time fixed for your return. The ſtation your huſband holds at the court of Vienna, will, I fear, long detain my beloved in a foreign land. But you are not amongſt ſtrangers; a huſband, a brother, and tender parent, muſt make every part of the globe equally your home.

home. I will therefore ſeek for my contentment in yours, and reſt ſatisfied with believing that you will always continue to love.

January 10, 1703-4.——I begin to find my thoughts ſo much diſſipated, that I am angry with myſelf; Mr. Arnold's exceſſive indulgence will ſpoil me; he is always contriving new ſcenes of pleaſure, and hurries me from one to the other. I do not wiſh to be perpetually fluttering about. The calm domeſtic life you know was always my choice; but I will not oppoſe my kind Mr. Arnold in his fond deſire of pleaſing me: beſides, I find that by his conſtantly gallanting me to public places, he begins himſelf to acquire a ſort of reliſh for them, which he did not uſe to have: at leaſt his prudence made him ſo to conform to the neceſſity of his circumſtances, while his fortune was ſmall, that he never indulged himſelf in any of the faſhionable expenſive amuſements; nor does he now in any but ſuch as I partake of with him. I find

find he is by nature open and liberal to exceſs. I muſt take care, without his being conſcious of it, to be a gentle check upon his bounteous ſpirit; I mean only ſo far as it regards myſelf: indeed this is the moſt material point, for in every other inſtance his generoſity is regulated by prudence. I am every hour more obliged to him, and ſhould hate myſelf if I did not find that he had an intire poſſeſſion of my love.

Sir George hardly ever comes near us but by formal invitation, and then his behaviour to Mr. Arnold is ſo very civil, and ſo very diſtant, that it mortifies me exceedingly. Mr. Arnold cannot but perceive it; but either his tenderneſs for me makes him take no notice of it, or elſe, not being well enough acquainted with my brother to know his diſpoſition, he may impute his coldneſs to his natural temper.

My mother ſays, he never names Mr. Faulkland or Miſs Burchell to her. I wiſh Sir George could intirely forget that unhappy affair.

February

February 1.——There is a ſtory propagated by the widow Arnold about the meeting between her and her huſband; the circumſtances of which are as follow.

She ſays, ſhe had dined one day in the city, and was returning home to her lodgings in York-building in a hackney-coach; that the driver, by his careleſſneſs in coming along the Strand, had one of his fore-wheels taken off by a waggon, which accident obliged her to alight: the foot-boy, who was behind the coach, had by the jolt been thrown off and received a hurt, which made it neceſſary to have him carried into a ſhop for aſſiſtance. That the lady herſelf, being no otherwiſe injured than by a little fright, found that ſhe was ſo near home, that ſhe did not think it worth while to wait for another carriage, but purſued her way on foot. It was a fine dry evening, about nine o'clock: and though there was no light but what the lamps afforded, yet as the ſtreets were full of people, ſhe had no apprehenſions of danger.

In

In this ſituation ſhe was accoſted by two gentlemen, who, ſeeing a lady well dreſſed and alone, inſiſted on ſeeing her ſafe to her lodgings. However diſagreeable ſuch an encounter was, ſhe ſaid ſhe did not give herſelf much concern about it, as ſhe was ſo near home, and expected to ſhake off her new acquaintance at the door of the houſe where ſhe lodged; and accordingly, when ſhe got there, ſhe told them ſhe was at home, and wiſhed them a good night; but the impertinents were not ſo eaſily to be put off. The door having been opened by the maid of the houſe, they both ruſhed in; her landlady, a ſingle woman, happened to be abroad, and there was no man in the houſe.

Mrs. Arnold thought ſhe had no way left, but to run up to her dining-room, and lock herſelf in; but in this ſhe was prevented, as the gentlemen, whom the ſervant of the houſe vainly endeavoured to oppoſe, got up ſtairs almoſt as ſoon as ſhe did. Her own maid, on hearing the rap at the door, had lighted candles in the dining-room; the two ſparks entered with

with her; but how was ſhe ſurprized to find that one of them was her huſband. Her fright, ſhe ſaid, had prevented her from diſcovering this ſooner, as ſhe had not looked in either of their faces, though there was a light in the hall; and Mr. Arnold's being half drunk, ſhe ſuppoſed, was the reaſon of his not perceiving ſooner who ſhe was.

The aſtoniſhment that they both were in, and the exclamation that each made in their turn, ſoon informed the companion of Mr. Arnold who the lady was. He congratulated them both on this fortunate miſtake, and ſaying, ſince chance had been ſo propitious to Mr. Arnold as to throw him into the arms of ſo charming a woman, he hoped his diſcovering her to be his wife would not render her the leſs agreeable to him; but that this unexpected meeting might be a means of re-uniting them in their former amity.

Mr. Arnold, ſhe ſays, in the preſence of this gentleman, advanced with open arms to embrace her, which ſhe not declining, his friend having again felici-

tated

tated them on their reconciliation, took his leave, and Mr. Arnold remained with his lady.

That at parting, which was not till late (as ſhe would not, on account of her reputation, permit him to paſs the night at her lodgings) he promiſed to bring her home to his houſe in a day or two; but unfortunately for her he was taken ill in the interim, which ſhe did not know of, till ſhe had an account that Mr. Arnold had loſt his ſenſes. The reaſon ſhe aſſigned for not inquiring after him ſooner was that her pride would not ſuffer her to make any advances to a man, who had been ſo injurious as to part with her; and ſhe thought it his duty to recal her, without her taking any ſtep towards it.

This ſtory ſeems plauſible; yet none of our friends believe a word of it, and imagine ſomebody has contrived it for her. The gentleman, who was the companion of Mr. Arnold that night, ſhe ſays, can, at a proper time, be produced as a witneſs, as alſo her own maid, who can teſtify the truth of this ſtory. In

the

the mean time this maid is kept out of the way, and nobody can gueſs at the gentleman, for his name is kept a profound ſecret.

I am delighted at the ſweetneſs of Mr. Arnold's temper: vexatious at this affair is likely to be, even at the beſt, he does not ſuffer it to interrupt our pleaſures or his own good humour. On the contrary, he is the more ſtudious of promoting every thing which he thinks will entertain me.

February 28.——At length the poor Miſs Burchell is happily rid of her burthen; a pretty little boy, my mother ſays it is: it was, immediately after his birth, at which my mother was preſent, privately baptized by the name of Orlando, and ſent away with its nurſe, a careful body, who had been before provided for it. It paſſes for the ſon of a captain Jefferis, abroad with the army. Miſs Burchell would never ſuffer the nurſe to ſee her; for as ſhe intends to reaſſume her own name, as ſoon as ſhe ſhall be in a con-

condition to leave her preſent retirement, ſhe would chooſe not to be known by the woman, in caſe of her going to ſee her child. Every thing was managed with ſo much privacy, and Miſs Burchell has lived ſo perfectly recluſe, nobody ever viſiting her but my mother, that in all probability this affair will always remain an intire ſecret.

My mother ſays, that as ſoon as Miſs Burchell (to whom ſhe conſiders herſelf as a kind of patroneſs) is tolerably recovered, ſhe will go down to Sidney Caſtle; for ſhe thinks herſelf in a ſtrange land any where but there. And would you believe it, my dear, ſhe has taken ſuch a fancy to Miſs Burchell, that ſhe talks of inviting her down with her, if ſhe can obtain her uncle's leave. The girl muſt certainly have ſome very amiable qualities, ſo to captivate my mother, or ſhe has an immenſity of art. I dare ſay the young lady will gladly accept of her invitation; it will undoubtedly be a moſt eligible ſituation for her. I do not know what Sir George may ſay to her carrying her humanity ſo far,

far, as he hates the name of this poor girl; but no matter, it may be a means of preſerving her character, which probably ſhe might not long keep, if ſhe returned to live with ſo vile a woman as I conclude her aunt to be; nor can ſhe have any colour for quitting her whilſt her uncle lives; for I find ſhe is an orphan, and has no relation but him. She muſt however go home for a while, in order to get leave from him for this viſit to Sidney Caſtle.

March 26, 1704.——I am told the widow Arnold computes the time of her lying-in about the latter end of the next month; if it ſhould happen, ſhe ſaves her diſtance, as her huſband died in July, a little before we went to Grimſton-hall. Mr. Arnold treats the affair very lightly, and is only concerned at ſeeing my mother ſo much affected by it. For my part, I form my behaviour upon Mr. Arnold's conduct; and as long as he appears eaſy, I ſhall certainly be ſo too.

My brother throws out ſome unkind

reflections: he ſays, he wonders the old ſybil at Grimſton-hall did not foreſee this; and congratulates me on my good fortune, in having my jointure ſettled on that part of the eſtate which is not diſputed. I really think he ſhews a ſort of ill-natured triumph even in his condolements; for he generally concludes them with thanking his ſtars that *he* had no hand in the match. I truſt in God we ſhall none of us have any cauſe to repent it. I am ſure I never ſhall; for if Mr. Arnold were reduced to the loweſt ebb of fortune, I ſhould find my conſolation in his kindneſs and affection.

March 27.—My mother is preparing to leave town. Miſs Burchell is quite recovered, and purpoſes going down to the country to obtain her uncle's conſent for the intended viſit. She ſays, ſhe can eaſily tell him ſhe made an acquaintance with lady Bidulph in her late excurſion to Bath, from whom ſhe received an invitation, and ſhe is ſure he will not refuſe to let her accept it.

Sir

Sir George laughs exceedingly at this plan. He ſays his mother ought not to be ſurprized at Faulkland's falling into the girl's ſnares, ſince ſhe herſelf has done the ſame; but he ſuppoſes my mother thinks ſhe is doing a very meritorious action, in affording an aſylum to this injured innocence. I give you my brother's words, for I aſſure you, as to myſelf, I approve of my mother's kindneſs to her, and think it may be a means of preſerving the girl from future miſchief.

April 2.——Miſs Burchell is gone into the country; and this morning, for the firſt time, ſevered me from the beſt of mothers. I cannot recover my ſpirits; I have wept all day. Mr. Arnold, ever good and obliging, would needs accompany her ſome miles on her journey; you may be ſure I was not left behind. Sir George was ſo polite as to ſay, He would eſcort her down to Sidney Caſtle. I was ſurprized at it; for he does not often do obliging things. My mother gladly accepted of his company, and ſaid, ſhe would

make him her priſoner, when ſhe had him there; for ſhe ſhould be quite melancholy without me for a time. Now though I ſhould be very unwilling not to allow the merit of a good-natured action to Sir George, yet do I attribute this in ſome meaſure to its anſwering a purpoſe of convenience to himſelf. You know, before his illneſs ſent him to the Spa, he always ſpent his ſummers with us at the Caſtle, though he has another very convenient houſe on his eſtate. When he was in London he never had any thing but lodgings, for which I have often been angry with him. My mother, ſince his return, made him a compliment of her houſe; but as the time ſhe took it for is now expired, and it is let to another family, he could no longer continue in it. Mr. Arnold, in the moſt affectionate manner, preſſed him to accept of an apartment with us, which he declined. Now as he could not, without ſhewing us an apparent ſlight, continue in town in other lodgings, I believe he, for this reaſon, preferred going down with my mother.

mother. Be it as it may, I am very glad that ſhe will have his company; for I make no doubt of his ſtaying with her ſome time, unleſs Miſs Burchell ſhould frighten him away.

April 5.——I have been ſo caſt down ſince my mother's departure, that Mr. Arnold's obliging tender aſſiduity to pleaſe and entertain me ſeems redoubled; but indeed I am wearied with a continual round of noiſy pleaſures, and long to get back to Arnold-abbey. I hope to be there in about three weeks, or a month at fartheſt. My mother has diſpenſed with our going down to her this ſummer. She thinks it might be attended with inconveniencies to me, and talks of coming to town again in a few months; but I ſhall inſiſt on her not giving herſelf the fatigue of ſo long a journey, unleſs ſhe comes to ſtay all the next winter with us.

April 20.———My mother writes me word that Miſs Burchell has obtained leave of her uncle, and is come to Sid-

ney caſtle: ſhe ſays, ſhe never ſaw a better behaved young creature. Sir George has taken ſo much offence at her coming, that he talks of going to his own houſe. My mother adds, 'He behaves however 'with manners, but I ſhall not preſs him 'to ſtay.'

May 6. —— An important birth, my Cecilia! the widow Arnold has produced a young miſs. I aſſure you the little damſel has been uſhered into life with all the ceremony due to a young heireſs; and her mother introduces her as one whom an unjuſt uncle debars of her right. Now you muſt know, that upon an exact calculation, this little girl has made her appearance juſt twelve days later than ſhe ought to have done, to prove her legitimacy, dating the poſſibility of her being Mr. Arnold's, from the very day whereon he took that illneſs of which he died, and which confined him for five days to his bed. In all that time his ſervants never left him for a minute; this has occaſioned various ſpeculations; our lawyers ſay that

it

it is enough to deſtroy her pretenſions; but ſome phyſicians, who have been conſulted on the occaſion, are of a contrary opinion; and declare they have known inſtances of children being born, even ſo long after the ſtated time alloted by nature for their coming into life.

It is a very unlucky affair, and has involved us in a law-ſuit. Who the perſon is that ſecretly abets the widow, we cannot find out; but it is certain ſhe has ſomebody; every one believes this is an infamous and unjuſt claim; and the woman's folly almoſt frees her from the ſuſpicion of its being of her own contriving.

May 10.——You cannot imagine, my Cecilia, how happy I think myſelf, after ſuch a hurrying winter as I have had, to find myſelf once more reſtored to my favourite pleaſures, the calm delights of ſolitude. Arnold-abbey ſeems a paradiſe to me now.

Lady Grimſton ſhewed me a ſpecimen of her humour this morning, in talking of the widow Arnold. She ſaid ſhe was

an *harlot*, that having already diſgraced the family, now wanted to beggar them; but that if Mr. Arnold did not make an example of her, ſhe would never own him for a kinſman.

My chearful old dean ſays, he is now completely happy, having lived to ſee his daughter married (while we were in town) very much to his and her ſatisfaction. I am heartily glad of it; neither am I ſorry (for her ſake) that ſhe has left the country.

May 11.———Mrs. Vere is come to ſpend a few weeks with me according to her promiſe. She is a truly amiable creature; her diſpoſition ſo gentle, her temper ſo mild, ſuch a ſweet humility in her whole deportment, that it aſtoniſhes me her mother can ſtill perſiſt in her unkindneſs to her. But the eldeſt daughter was always her darling, who I underſtand is pretty much of her mother's own caſt, and makes a very termagant wife to a very turbulent huſband. So that notwithſtanding their title (for he is a baronet) and immenſe riches, they are a very miſerable pair.

They

They were lately to pay lady Grimſton a viſit; but there happened ſuch a fracas, that probably it may be the laſt ſhe will ever receive from them. The huſband it ſeems, though very rough and ſurly in his nature, is, notwithſtanding, a well-meaning man, and not void of humanity; which had induced him to give a ſmall portion to a young girl, a diſtant relation of his own, who had been left an orphan. She was beloved by the ſon of a ſubſtantial farmer, a tenant of the baronet's, and had an equal affection for him; but the young man, depending intirely on his father for his future proſpects, durſt not take a wife without ſomething to begin the world with; for his father had juſt put him into the management of one of his farms. The young lady and her mother,-(who was a widow, and is but lately dead) had boarded for ſome years at this honeſt farmer's houſe, and in that time a mutual love had been contracted between the young people. The old man himſelf liked the girl ſo well for a daughter-in-law, that his only objection was her want of

fortune; but this was ſuch an obſtacle as was not to be ſurmounted by a man, who, being accuſtomed to earn money by indefatigable induſtry, put the utmoſt value upon it. His regard to his ſon's happineſs, however, made him reſolve to try an experiment in his favour, and accordingly he plucked up courage, and went to his landlord. He told him, in his own blunt way, that he came to ſpeak to him in behalf of a poor young gentlewoman that was his (Sir William's) relation. I have a ſon that loves her, ſaid he, and ſhe loves him, but I cannot afford to let the boy marry a wife that has nothing; and you know ſhe has no portion. I would not deſire much with her, for ſhe is a good girl, and very houſewifely; But if you will be ſo kind to give ſomething to ſet them a-going a little, I ſhall be content; if not, you will be the cauſe of my ſon's loſing a wife, for he ſwears he will never marry any other woman; and ſhe, poor thing, may pine away for love. I do not deſire this match out of the ambition of having my boy related to you,

but

but becauſe I think the girl is an honeſt girl, and may make him happy.

The rough honeſty of the farmer pleaſed his landlord ſo well, that he gave the young woman five hundred pounds, to ſet them a-going, as the old yeoman termed it. Though this ſum was but a trifle to a man of his fortune, and the giving it was a praiſe-worthy action, yet did it exceedingly diſpleaſe his lady, eſpecially as he had not thought proper to conſult her on the occaſion. She was not contented with venting her indignation on her huſband at home, but ſhe renewed the quarrel, by complaining to lady Grimſton, that her opinion and advice were not only deſpiſed, but that Sir William was laviſhing away the fortune *ſhe* had brought him upon a *tribe* of poor relations of his own. Lady Grimſton immediately took fire; ſhe could not bear the thoughts of having her daughter's authority of leſs weight in his family than her own had been, and ſhe attacked her ſon-in-law with acrimony on the ſubject. His anſwer to her was ſhort. Look

ye,

ye, lady Grimſton, you made a very obſtreperous wife to a very peaceable huſband; your daughter, I find, is mightily diſpoſed to follow your example; but as I am not quite ſo tame as my father-in-law was, I will ſuffer her to ſee as little of it as may be. With this he turned from her, and ordering his coach and ſix to be got ready immediately, with very little ceremony he forced his wife into it, and carried her home directly, leaving lady Grimſton foaming with rage. The altercation had been carried on with ſo little caution, that the ſervants heard it, and the ſtory is the jeſt of the neighbourhood.

I confeſs I am not ſorry for this breach; it may be the better for poor Mrs. Vere; for though her mother's jointure reverts to a male relation, on whom the eſtate was ſettled, yet as lady Grimſton has a large perſonal fortune, it is in her power to make her daughter full amends for the injury ſhe did her.

May 20.——Mr. Arnold is improving his

his gardens, and taking in a great deal more ground to enlarge them. I do not expreſs the leaſt diſſatisfaction at this, tho' I own I could wiſh he would not engage in new expences on an eſtate which is now in litigation; but our lawyers are ſo ſanguine, that they encourage him to proceed.

[*The following is writ in the hand of the lady who gave the editor theſe papers:* "*Here follows an interval of four* "*months; in which time, though the* "*Journal was regularly continued, no-* "*thing material to her ſtory occurred but* "*the birth of a daughter; after which ſhe proceeds.*"]

September 25.——How delightful are the new ſenſations, my dear Cecilia, that I feel hourly ſpringing in my heart! Surely the tenderneſs of a mother can never be ſufficiently repaid; and I now more than ever rejoice in having, by an obedience, which perhaps I once thought had ſome little merit in it, contributed ſo much

much to the repoſe of a parent to whom I have ſuch numberleſs obligations. I never ſee my dear little girl but I think ſuch were the tender ſentiments, the ſweet anxieties, that my honoured and beloved mother felt when her Sidney was ſuch a brat as this. Then I ſay, ſurely I have a right to all the duty, all the filial love that this creature can ſhew me, in return for my fondneſs. As for Mr. Arnold, he idolizes it; you never ſaw ſo good a nurſe as he makes. Lady Grimſton declares, we are both in a fair way of ruining the child, and adviſes us to ſend it out of the houſe, that we may not grow too fond of it; but we ſhall hardly take her counſel.

September 28.——I informed you before that Miſs Burchell had been ſummoned home by her uncle, who was then very ill. She has lately written an account to my mother of his death; and that as ſhe has now her fortune in her own hands, ſhe intends immediately to quit her aunt, and look out for ſome genteel

genteel and reputable family in London (where it ſeems ſhe chooſes to reſide) to lodge with.

My mother, in her letter to me, expreſſes great ſatisfaction at her reſolution to leave her aunt, but is not without her fears that ſo pretty a young woman, left to her own guidance, may be liable to danger; though ſhe thinks both her natural diſpoſition, and her good ſenſe, ſufficient to guard her againſt actual evil.

Our lawyer writes us word, that he has had an offer of a compoſition, propoſed by the widow Arnold's people: he ſays, though the ſum they mention is a very round one, yet it plainly indicates the weakneſs of their hopes; and concludes with telling Mr. Arnold, that if ſix-pence would buy them off, he ſhould not, with his conſent, give it to them; as it would tacitly admit the legality of their claim, and might be productive of troubleſome conſequences hereafter; and therefore he would by all means have the iſſue fairly tried. Mr. Arnold laughs heartily at the propoſal, but

but ſays he is very much obliged to the lady for condeſcending to give up more than half, when her daughter has a right to the whole; without whoſe conſent he ſuppoſes it is not in the mother's power to make terms.

I wiſh we were rid of this troubleſome affair, as it muſt hurry us to town ſooner than we intended, and the country is ſtill delightful.

London, October 1.——Again we have quitted our ſweet retirement for the noiſe and buſtle of London; but this law-buſineſs, it ſeems, muſt be cloſely purſued, though our antagoniſt's motions ſeem a little dilatory. We cannot find out the ſecret ſpring that ſets the machine a-going; the wheels however do not ſeem to move with ſuch alacrity as they did; though the widow ſtill talks big, and ſays, we ſhall repent of having rejected her offer.

October 3.——My brother is arrived in town, but took care to ſettle himſelf in

in handſome commodious lodgings before he paid us a viſit; for fear, I ſuppoſe, that we ſhould again preſs him to accept of apartments in our houſe. I ſee he is determined to keep up nothing more than an intercourſe barely civil. Mr. Arnold cannot but be diſguſted with his behaviour, but he is too delicate to take notice of it to me.

October 7.——I am diſappointed in my hopes of ſeeing my dear mother in town this winter. Her apartment was ready for her, and I delighted myſelf with the thoughts of ſeeing her in poſſeſſion of it, at leaſt for a few months; but ſhe writes me word that her old rheumatic complaint is returned on her with ſuch violence, that ſhe cannot think of undertaking the journey. Sadly I am grieved at this news, and ſhall long to have the winter over, that Mr. Arnold and I may fly to Sidney Caſtle; he has promiſed me this ſatisfaction early in the ſummer.

My mother informs me that Miſs Burchell conſtantly correſponds with her; ſhe

ſhe tells her that her aunt is come to town to ſolicit for her penſion, but that ſhe never ſees her; and as ſhe means to drop all correſpondence with her, ſhe does not intend even to let her know where ſhe lodges. I commend Miſs Burchell highly for this, as the acquaintance of ſuch a woman may be hurtful to her reputation.

[*Here enſues another interval of nine months, in which nothing particular is related, but that Mrs. Arnold became mother to a ſecond child. This laſt circumſtance, with a few others preceding and ſucceeding that event, are related in the Journal by her maid Patty; after which Mrs. Arnold herſelf proceeds.*]

July 1, 1705.———Again, my dear Cecilia, I am able to reaſſume my pen. I have read what Patty has writ, and find ſhe is admirable at the anecdotes of a nurſery. Am I not rich, think you? Two daughters, and both perfect beauties, and great wits you may be ſure!

The new-born damſel was baptized this day by the dear-loved name of Cecilia.

I am

I am angry with Mr. Arnold, he takes ſo little notice of this young ſtranger; his affections are all engaged by Dolly: indeed, I am almoſt jealous of her; for he ſpends moſt of the time he is at home in the nurſery.

Our antagoniſt is grown alert again, and has renewed her efforts, which we thought began to flag a little, with freſh vigour. Whence ſhe derives thoſe revived hopes is ſtill a myſtery; but ſhe now ſays, ſhe would not accept of a compoſition if it were offered. My poor Mr. Arnold begins to fret a little; it now-and-then makes him thoughtful; not that, he ſays, he has the leaſt doubt about his ſucceſs, but he has been much haraſſed with the neceſſary attendance that the cauſe requires, and downright tired with dangling after lawyers; beſides, they ſay the cauſe cannot come to an hearing in the enſuing term, though they before made us hope that it would be at an end long before this time.

July 3.—I am mortified exceedingly, my dear

dear Cecilia: I find I am not likely to ſee my mother this ſummer. I thought I could not have lived ſo long from her ſight. Indeed it was purely in the hope of making her this viſit, that I prevented her coming to town in the ſpring, which ſhe purpoſed doing, though far from being well enough to undertake the journey. I own I have been impatient under my confinement, as that, and my previous circumſtances, detained us ſo long in town, and I this day aſked Mr. Arnold when we ſhould ſet out for Sidney Caſtle. He anſwered me, that he feared it would not be in his power this ſeaſon to pay the intended viſit to my mother: he ſays, he has not been near his eſtate in Kent theſe five years, except for a day or two at a time, and that he thinks it neceſſary to ſee what condition it is in. I believe I have told you that there is a pretty houſe on it. The place is called South-park, and is that which my mother choſe for my ſettlement. Mr. Arnold, who always preferred Arnold-abbey to it, hardly ever viſited this place; and as he never reſided there,

there, and only lay at an inn when he went down, the houſe is unfurniſhed, excepting a room or two, which a man who receives his rent has juſt made habitable for his own convenience.

But that I have laid it down as a rule never to oppoſe ſo good, ſo indulgent a huſband as Mr. Arnold is, in any inſtance wherein I do not think a ſuperior duty requires me to do ſo, I ſhould certainly ſhew ſome diſapprobation of what he now purpoſes doing. It will be attended with ſo much trouble, ſo much expence too—he has ordered the houſe at South-park to be completely furniſhed, and ſays, he hopes I ſhall like it ſo well as to be induced to paſs the remainder of the ſummer there. Moſt ſure it is, every place will be delightful to me where I can enjoy his company, and have my dear little babes with me; but methinks two country houſes are an unneceſſary charge, and more than ſuits our fortune. I pray God this tender huſband may not have a ſtrong and prudent reaſon for this conduct, which out of kindneſs he conceals;

per-

perhaps he thinks this little ſpot at South-park may ſome time hence be the whole of our dependance, and he has a mind to be before-hand with ill fortune, in rendering that retreat agreeable to me, and rather an object of choice than of neceſſity. If this be his motive, how much am I obliged to him? He has not hinted any thing like it; nor would I daſh the pleaſure he ſeems to promiſe himſelf there, by inſinuating the leaſt ſuſpicion of what his reaſons are for going to it. If we loſe Arnold-abbey, and the whole eſtate belonging to it, I ſhall only regret it for his ſake.

July 8.———We are to ſet out to-morrow, my Cecilia, for our place in Kent. I have made the beſt apology that I could to my mother, and Mr. Arnold too has writ to her; but I know ſhe will be extremely diſappointed at not ſeeing us.

July 12.——We are ſafely arrived at South-park, Mr. Arnold in high ſpirits; and

and my two young travellers bore the fatigue extremely well.

I am not ſurprized that Mr. Arnold liked the old family-ſeat better than this. I cannot ſay I am much charmed with it, but I will not let him ſee that. I affect to admire, and ſeem pleaſed with every thing that affords me the leaſt opportunity of commendation. The houſe is a very neat one; it has not been many years built, and is in perfectly good repair. It is genteely, though plainly furniſhed, and we have a tolerable garden; but as the whole domain is let, we are obliged to take a few fields from one of our tenants, to ſupply our immediate wants. We are in a very genteel and populous neighbourhood, and within a mile of a good market town.

July 2c.——I have regretted nothing ſo much in my abſence from Arnold-abbey, as the being cut off from the hope of ſeeing my amiable Mrs. Vere. We can have but *one friend* to ſhare our heart, to whom we have no reſerve, and

and whoſe loſs is irreparable; but I perceive the abſence of a pleaſing acquaintance, whoſe ſociety is no farther neceſſary to us, than as it contributes to enliven ſolitude, and gets a preference to others merely by compariſon, is a loſs eaſily ſupplied; this I find by experience. There are Mrs. Veres every where; but, alas! there is but *one* Cecilia!

I was viſited to-day by two ladies that I am charmed with, though it is the firſt time I have ſeen either of them. The one is Lady V. of whom you have formerly heard. Her lord and ſhe came together; their ſeat is within a mile of us, and Mr. Arnold had a ſlight acquaintance with lord V. before. My lady is about forty, and has that kind of countenance that at once invites your confidence; I never ſaw integrity, benevolence, and good ſenſe, more ſtrongly pictured in a face; her addreſs is ſo plain, ſo perfectly free from affectation, or any of the little ſupercilious forms of ceremony, that a perſon, ignorant of what true politeneſs conſiſts in, would imagine ſhe wanted breeding;

ing; yet ſhe received her education in a court; but ſhe ſeems to let good ſenſe and good nature preſide over all her words and actions rather than form. She told me ſhe had deferred her viſit to me, longer perhaps than the laws of decorum would admit of, as we were ſuch near neighbours; but, ſaid ſhe, I was determined not to be over-looked in the crowd of viſitors that have been thronging to you every day, ſince you came down. The character I have heard of you, makes me wiſh for an intimacy with you, and you are not to look upon this as a viſit of ceremony, but as an advance towards that friendſhip I wiſh to cultivate.

She ſpoke this with ſo frank an air, that, flattering as the compliment appeared, I could not help believing her ſincere; and thought myſelf, that my appearance did not diminiſh that good opinion which ſhe ſaid ſhe had conceived of me from report.

Lord V— is many years older than his lady; a robuſt man, as plain in his way as my lady is in her's; though *his* way

and *her*'s are very different, for he is frank even to bluntneſs, but the beſt humoured man living.

The other lady whom I mentioned is a widow; her name is Gerrarde, and ſhe lives upon a little eſtate ſhe has in this neighbourhood. I think I never beheld ſo fine a creature; ſhe is about ſix-and-twenty; her ſtature, which is much above the common ſize, is rendered perfectly graceful and majeſtic by one of the fineſt ſhapes in the world; if her face is not altogether ſo regularly beautiful as her perſon, it is, however, handſome enough to render any woman charming who had nothing elſe to boaſt of. Whether her underſtanding be of a piece with the reſt, I have not yet been able to diſcover. Her viſit to me was but ſhort, for ſhe had not ſat with me an hour, when lady V— came in, and ſhe then took her leave; but by what I could obſerve in that little time, ſhe ſeems to have as much vivacity and agreeable humour, as I ever met with in any one. She preſſed me to dine with her at her cottage, as ſhe calls it, to-morrow,

and

and I like her too well to refuſe the invitation.

Theſe two charming women, I think, I ſhall ſingle out for my chief intimates, from the crowd which have been to compliment me on my coming into this country.

Mr. Arnold is mightily pleaſed with them both; but he gives the preference to lady V——, whom, though he had a ſlight acquaintance with her lord, he never ſaw before. But he is almoſt as great a ſtranger in this place as I am: he is highly delighted at my having met with people who are likely to render it agreeable to me.

July 21.——We dined to-day according to appointment with Mrs. Gerrarde. A cottage ſhe called her houſe, nor does it appear much better at the out-ſide, but within it is a fairy palace. Never was any thing ſo neat, ſo elegant, ſo perfectly well fancied, as the fitting up of all her rooms. Her bedchambers are furniſhed with fine chintz, and her drawing-room with the

prettieſt Indian ſattin I ever ſaw. Her little villa is called Aſhby, and her huſband, ſhe told me, purchaſed it for her ſometime before his death, and left it to her; but ſhe has ſince had a conſiderable addition to her fortune by the death of a relation.

Our entertainment was ſplendid almoſt to profuſion, though there was no company but Mr. Arnold and I. I told her, if ſhe always gave ſuch dinners, it would frighten me away from her; indeed it was the only circumſtance in her whole conduct that did not pleaſe me, for I was charmed with the reſt of her behaviour. They muſt ſurely be of a very churliſh diſpoſition, who are not pleaſed where a manifeſt deſire to oblige is conſpicuous in every word and action. If Mrs. Gerrarde is not as highly poliſhed as ſome women are, who, perhaps, have had a more enlarged education, ſhe makes full amends for it by a perfect good humour, a ſprightlineſs always entertaining, and a quickneſs of thought that gives her converſation an air

air of ſomething very *like* wit, and which I dare ſay paſſes for the thing itſelf with moſt people.

July 24.—I have returned lady V—'s viſit, and am more delighted with her than before. Mr. Arnold went with me; but my lord not being at home, he went to ramble about the grounds, ſo that I had a long *tête à tête* with lady V—. She is an admirable woman, ſo fine an underſtanding, ſuch delicacy of ſentiment, and ſuch an unaffected complaiſance in her manner, that I do not wonder my lord perfectly adores her. There is a tenderneſs, a maternal kindneſs in her behaviour towards me, that fills me at once with love and reverence for her; and, next to my Cecilia, I think I never met with any woman whom I could ſo highly eſteem as lady V—. She is an admirable miſtreſs of her needle, and every room in her houſe exhibits ſome production of a very fine genius, united with very great induſtry; for there are beds, chairs, and carpets, beſides ſome very pretty rural

proſpects in pannels, executed with inimitable ſkill, and very excellent taſte. She tells me, if I will give her leave to bring her work with her, ſhe will live whole days with me.

I am rejoiced now that Mr. Arnold thought of coming to South-park. How valuable is the acquaintance of ſuch a woman as lady V—! and I might never have known her, but for a circumſtance to which I was at firſt ſo averſe. And then my agreeable lively Mrs. Gerrarde! My acquaintance at Arnold-abbey begins to fade upon my memory: to ſay the truth, I think of none of them with pleaſure, but Mrs. Vere, and my good humoured old dean.

Auguſt 4.—Mrs. Gerrarde is a little ſaucy monopoliſt; ſhe grumbles if I do not ſee her every day, and is downright jealous of my intimacy with lady V—. They are acquainted, but I don't find there is a very cloſe intercourſe between them: Mrs. Gerrarde ſays, her ladyſhip is too good a houſewife for her; and as ſhe

ſhe is not very fond of needle-work herſelf, ſhe cannot endure people that are always poring over a frame. I find indeed, that this ſprightly rogue is fonder of cards than of work; ſhe draws Mr. Arnold and me in very often for a pool at piquet: at her houſe I am obliged to ſubmit; but at my own, I often take up a book, when ſhe and Mr. Arnold are engaged at their game, and make them decide the conteſt between them. Nay, I threaten that I will, ſome night or other, ſteal to-bed, and leave them; for ſhe is unconſcionable at late hours; and as ſhe lives very near us, and keeps a chariot, ſhe does not ſcruple to go home at any hour of the night. What a pity it is ſo amiable a woman ſhould be thus fondly attached to ſo unprofitable an amuſement! for I begin to ſee play is her foible; though, to do her juſtice, ſhe never engages but for very trifling ſums, and that only in our own little domeſtic way. But this paſſion may grow upon her, and ſhe may be led unawares into the loſing more than her fortune can bear.

Auguſt 12.——I never was ſo diſconcerted as I have been this day: you will be ſurprized when I tell you, it was by my good lady V—. She came to paſs the day with me, Mr. Arnold being engaged abroad.

We were both ſitting at work in the parlour: lady V— had continued ſilent for a good while; at laſt looking at me with a moſt benign ſmile, for I had at the ſame inſtant caſt my eyes at her; I was juſt then thinking, my dear Mrs. Arnold, ſaid ſhe, that I once (though perhaps you did not know it) flattered myſelf with the hopes of being related to you. Her words threw me into confuſion, though I did not know their meaning. It would have been both an honour and a happineſs to me, madam, I replied, though I don't know by what means I was ever likely to poſſeſs it. She continued ſmiling, but ſeemed in ſuſpence whether ſhe ſhould proceed. You will pardon my curioſity, my dear, ſaid ſhe, but give me leave to aſk, whether Mr. Arnold was not once near loſing the happineſs he now enjoys? I felt my face

glow

glow as ſhe ſpoke. There was once a treaty of marriage on foot, madam, I anſwered, between me and another gentleman. I am ſorry I mentioned it, ſaid my lady, obſerving my confuſion; but as I was no ſtranger to the affair while it was tranſacting, and Mr. Faulkland is a kinſman of mine, I hope you will forgive my inquiſitiveneſs; for I own I have a curioſity, which I believe nobody but yourſelf can gratify; and if I did not think you the moſt candid, as well as the beſt tempered creature living, I durſt not puſh my inquiry. My lord, you are to know, was in London at the time Mr. Faulkland was firſt introduced to you; and as they are extremely fond of each other, Mr. Faulkland did not ſcruple to diſcloſe his paſſion to him, nor the ſucceſs it then appeared likely to be crowned with, giving him at the ſame time ſuch a character of you, as I have ſince found you deſerve.

When my lord returned to V—hall, which he was obliged to do very ſoon after Mr. Faulkland had made this diſco-

very to him, he informed me of the alliance my couſin Faulkland was going to make; and we were pleaſing ourſelves with the thoughts of congratulating him on his happineſs, when we received a letter from him that put an end to all our expectations; this letter contained but four diſtracted lines: he told my lord, in broken ſentences, that he had loſt all hopes of Miſs Bidulph; that an act of indiſcretion had been conſtrued into a capital crime; and that being baniſhed from the preſence of the woman he adored, he was immediately about to bid adieu to England, perhaps for ever.

This was the ſubſtance of what he wrote to us: we have heard from him ſince a few times, but he never cleared up the matter to us, nor ever ſo much as mentioned it. I have not been in London ſince; my lord has; but he never could get any light into the myſtery: he heard from ſome of our friends, who knew of the intended match, that it was broke off nobody knew why. There were, however, ſeveral idle ſurmiſes thrown out;

out; ſome laid the blame on Mr. Faulkland, and ſome on you; but the truth I believe remains ſtill a ſecret. Now, my dear, if my curioſity is improper, or if there was any particular motive to this diſappointment of my kinſman's hopes, which you don't chooſe to reveal, forgive my inquiry, and think no more of it; but take up that book, and read to me while I work.

Though my lady gave me this kind opportunity of evading her queſtion, I did not lay hold of it! I did not indeed chooſe to reveal the whole of this affair, becauſe I did not think myſelf at liberty to divulge Miſs Burchell's ſecret, however I might diſcover my own. I told my lady in general terms, that though Mr. Faulkland might pretend to a lady every way my ſuperior, yet there was an objection to him of no ſmall weight with us; that my mother had been informed of a very recent piece of gallantry he had had with a perſon of ſome condition, and that it had diſguſted her ſo much, ſhe could not think of uniting me with a

man

man whoſe paſſions were not a little more ſtaid; and that this was the ſole reaſon of her diſlike to a gentleman, who was in every other reſpect unexceptionable. I am glad it was no worſe, ſaid lady V—, ſmiling; I am ſure Mr. Faulkland is not capable of a *baſe* action; youthful follies he may have had, though I believe as few even of thoſe to anſwer for as moſt men of his years. I make not the leaſt doubt, however, that lady Bidulph was guided by prudence in what ſhe did. She certainly could not be too cautious in the diſpoſal of *ſuch* a child as you; and whatever Mr. Faulkland's diſappointment may be, *you* I hope are happy. Lady V— looked at me as ſhe pronounced theſe words, with an inquiſitive, though tender regard. I was glad of an opportunity of enlarging on the merits of Mr. Arnold, and told her, I was as happy as my heart could wiſh, or the worthieſt of men could make me. I am glad of it, ſaid ſhe, with a quickneſs in her voice; but don't imagine, my dear Mrs. Arnold (and ſhe took me by the hand) that I introduced

troduced this converſation merely to gratify a curioſity which I fear you muſt condemn in your private thoughts, though you have been ſo good as to ſatisfy it: I had another reaſon, a much ſtronger one. What is it, dear madam? almoſt ſtarting with apprehenſions of I did not know what. Don't be alarmed, ſaid ſhe, ſmiling, it is only this; a great aunt of Mr. Faulkland's is lately dead, who has left him a conſiderable perſonal eſtate, and he is coming over to take poſſeſſion of it; otherwiſe I don't know when we ſhould have ſeen him in England. My lord had a letter very lately from him; he was then at Turin, where he had met with our eldeſt ſon, who is now on his travels: he told us he had letters and ſome tokens of love to deliver us from him; and that he ſhould immediately on his arrival in England come to V—hall, where he ſhould paſs a month with us. Now as we expect him daily, I had a mind to apprize you of his intended viſit, that you might not be ſurprized, by perhaps unexpectedly meeting him at my houſe. I thanked her ladyſhip

for

for her obliging caution, though I thought it had ſomething in it that mortified me. I told her, that though I ſhould not ſeek to renew my acquaintance with Mr. Faulkland, I had yet no reaſon to avoid him. Lady V——, who is extremely quick of apprehenſion, replied, Without doubt madam, you have not; but you might be ſurprized at ſeeing him notwithſtanding.

She preſently turned the diſcourſe: but made me happy the whole day, by that inexhauſtible fund of good ſenſe and improving knowledge of which ſhe is miſtreſs.

Mr. Arnold came not home till very late; he complains that he is got into a knot of acquaintance that like the bottle too well; but I am ſure his natural ſobriety is ſuch, that it will not be in the power of example to lead him into intemperance; though I am vexed he has fallen into ſuch acquaintance, becauſe I know drinking is diſagreeable to him: yet a country gentleman muſt ſometimes give a little into it, to avoid the character of being ſingular.

Auguſt

Auguſt 22.—— Surprized I was not, becauſe I came prepared; but I own I was abaſhed at ſeeing Mr. Faulkland to-day. Mr. Arnold and I were invited to dine at lord V——'s, and his lordſhip, and his gueſt, came in from the fields, where they had been walking, juſt as we were ready to ſit down to table.

There happened to be a good deal more company; Mr. Faulkland was not introduced; ſo that there was no room for any thing conſtrained or improper of either ſide. I preſently recovered the little embarraſſment, that his firſt entrance into the room occaſioned. I am ſure nobody took notice of it; for dinner being immediately ſerved, there was a ſort of buſtle in hurrying out of the drawing-room. The crowd we had at table deſtroyed all converſation; and nothing particular was ſaid during dinner. Lady V— ſoon withdrew, and all her female friends followed her. I obſerved ſhe frequently glanced her penetrating eyes at Mr. Faulkland, while we were at table, but I did not chuſe to make any obſerva-

tions

tions on him. We had not been long ſeated at our coffee, when four of the gentlemen ſlipped from their company and came to us: theſe were Mr. Arnold, Mr. Faulkland, and two others. My lord is pretty free at his bottle, and none of theſe gentlemen I ſuppoſe were fond of that entertainement. Lady V—and I were ſitting on a couch: I called to Mr. Arnold, and placed him between us: Mr. Faulkland approached me, and then, for the firſt time, with a reſpectful diſtance, inquired after my mother and Sir George, telling me he had miſſed of the latter when he was in London, being told he was at Sidney Caſtle. After a few more indifferent queſtions, he took a diſh of coffee, and retired with it to a window. Mr. Arnold aſked me in a whiſper, if I was acquainted with Mr. Faulkland; I could only anſwer, that I was formerly very well acquainted with him. Nothing more paſſed between Mr. Faulkland and me the whole evening: he returned ſoon to the company in the next room, and I ſaw no more of him.

I can with the utmoſt ſincerity aſſure my Cecilia, that I now behold Mr. Faulkland with as much indifference as I do any other man of my acquaintance. Time, joined to my own efforts, muſt, without any other help, have intirely ſubdued an inclination which was always reſtrained by prudential motives, and rendered ſubſervient to my duty; but I have, beſides this, now acquired a ſhield that muſt render me invulnerable; I mean the perfect and tender affection I bear my huſband: this has completely ſecured me againſt the moſt diſtant apprehenſions of being alarmed from any other quarter; yet notwithſtanding all this, I can't ſay that I am quite ſatisfied at this renewal of my acquaintance with Mr. Faulkland. I hope, and indeed it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that I have now as little intereſt in *his* heart as he has in mine: it is but natural to believe that a gay young man, like him, ſhould not be ſo weak as to nouriſh a hopeleſs paſſion for more than two years, eſpecially as he has never once ſeen the object of it in all that time; and muſt,

without

without doubt, have had his attention engaged to all others in all likelihood much preferable to her; ſo that I think I have reaſon to be as eaſy on this account as on my own. But ſtill I am diſquieted in my mind; I have a delicacy that takes alarm at the verieſt trifles, and has been a ſource of pain to me my whole life-time: it makes me unhappy to think that I am now under an almoſt unavoidable neceſſity of ſometimes ſeeing and converſing with a man, who once had ſuch convincing proofs that he was not indifferent to me.

Mr. Arnold's ignorance of our former connections makes it ſtill worſe. At the time I was ſo averſe to his knowing any thing of this affair, I flattered myſelf I ſhould never ſee Mr. Faulkland more, or at leaſt never be obliged to have any intercourſe with him; but I now lament that I did not take my mother's advice, and diſcloſe the whole affair at firſt. Oh, my Cecilia! when the ſmalleſt deviations from candor (which we ſuppoſe diſcretion) are thus puniſhed with remorſe, what muſt

they

they feel whoſe whole life is one continued act of diſſimulation? If Mr. Arnold had been acquainted with my former engagements, my heart would be more at eaſe, and I ſhould then converſe with this man with all the diſengaged freedom of a common friend. I wiſh Mr. Arnold's curioſity would excite him to aſk me ſome queſtions relative to my acquaintance with Mr. Faulkland, that I might have an opportunity of telling him the ſecret. But the inquiry he made at lady V—'s was in a careleſs manner; he was ſatisfied with my reply, and ſpoke not of him ſince.

You will laugh perhaps when I tell you that I have not courage to mention it firſt: Mr. Faulkland is reckoned a very fine gentleman, and I think it would have ſuch an air of vanity to tell my huſband that I refuſed him: then it would bring on ſuch a train of explanations, and poor Miſs Burchell's hiſtory muſt come out; for a huſband on ſuch a ſubject might be diſguſted with concealments of any kind; and I doubt whether even ſome circumſtances in my particular ſhare of this ſtory might

might not diſpleaſe him. In ſhort, I am bewildered, and know not what to wiſh for; but muſt e'en let things take their courſe, and reſt ſatisfied in the integrity of my own heart.

Auguſt 26—Oh, my dear! I am mortified to the laſt degree, leſt Mr. Arnold ſhould, from ſome indiſcreet tongue, have received a hint of my former engagement; he may think me diſingenuous for never having mentioned it, eſpecially ſince Mr. Faulkland has been in the neighbourhood: I think his nature is too open to entertain any ſuſpicions eſſentially injurious to me; yet may this affair, circumſtanced as it is, make an unfavourable impreſſion on him. I wiſh I had been before-hand with any officious whiſperer: he has got ſo many new acquaintance, and is ſo much abroad, that the ſtory may have reached his ears. God forbid it ſhould affect his mind with cauſeleſs uneaſineſs; I would Mr. Faulkland were a thouſand miles from V—hall. I think Mr. Arnold is altered ſince his arrival

rival there.—Colder he appears to be—I hope I but *fancy* it—yet there *is* a change—his looks are leſs kind—his voice has loſt that tenderneſs that it uſed to have in ſpeaking to me—yet this may only be his temper—a man cannot always be a lover—Oh, I ſicken at the very thought of Mr. Arnold's entertaining a doubt of my true affection for him! I would not live in this ſuſpence for millions. I would rather he ſhould treat me roughly—if I diſcovered that to be his humour, though it would frighten me, yet ſhould I patiently conform to it.

Auguſt 30.———That which was ever the terror of my thoughts is come upon me—Mr. Arnold—Ah, my dear Cecilia! Mr. Arnold is no longer the ſame! Coldneſs and indifference have at length ſucceeded to love, to complacency, and the fondeſt attention—What a change! but the *cauſe*, my dear! that remains a ſecret locked up in his own breaſt. It cannot be that a whiſper, an idle rumour ſhould affect him thus. What if he *has* heard

that

that Mr. Faulkland loved me once? That we were to have been married? Cannot he aſk me the queſtion? I long to ſet his heart at eaſe—yet cannot mention the affair firſt after ſo long a ſilence; it would look like a conſciouſneſs. A conſciouſneſs of what? I have nothing to accuſe myſelf of.

September 1.——I am no longer in doubt.—The cauſe, the fatal cauſe of Mr. Arnold's change, is diſcovered. This miſerable day has diſcloſed the ſecret to me: a black, a complicated ſcene of miſchief.

Mr. Arnold rode out this morning. He told me he was to dine with a gentleman at ſome miles diſtance, and ſhould not return till late in the evening.

He was but juſt gone, when a lady of my acquaintance called in upon me, to requeſt I would go with her to a play that was to be performed at night. You muſt know we have had a company of players in the neighbourhood for ſome time paſt, and it was to one of thoſe

poor

poor people's benefits that ſhe deſired my company. I promiſed to attend her, though you know I don't much admire thoſe ſort of entertainments in the country, and ſeldom go to them.

The lady and her huſband called upon me at the appointed hour, and I went with them in their coach. The place which the players had fitted up for their purpoſe, had formerly been a pretty large ſchool-room, and could, with the addition of a gallery (which they had made) with eaſe contain above three hundred people. The play had been beſpoke by ſome of the principal ladies in the neighbourhood, who had uſed all their intereſt for the performer, ſo that the houſe was as full as it could hold. The audience conſiſting chiefly of faſhionable people, it was with difficulty that we reached the places which were kept for us in the pit, as they happened to be on the bench next the ſtage, and the door was at the other end of the houſe. The firſt object that I obſerved on my coming in was Mr. Faulkland; he bowed to me at a diſtance, but made no attempts

attemps to approach me. The play was come to the latter end of the fourth act, and the curtain was let down to make ſome preparation on the ſtage, when we were alarmed with the cry of fire.

It happened that the carpenters, who had been employed in fitting up this extempore theatre, had left a heap of ſhavings in a little place behind the ſtage, which had been converted into a dreſſing-room; a little boy belonging to the company had found a candle in it, and having piled up the ſhavings, ſet them on fire, and left them burning: the flame communicated itſelf to ſome dry boards which lay in the room, and in a few minutes the whole was in a blaze. Some perſons who heard the crackling of wood, opened the door, when the flame burſt out with ſuch violence, that the ſcenes were preſently on fire, and the curtain, which as I told you was dropt, ſoon caught it.

The conſternation and terror of the poor people, whoſe *all* was deſtroying, is not to be deſcribed: the women ſkrieking,

ing, threw themſelves off the ſtage into the pit, as the ſmoke and flames terrified them from attempting to get out any other way, though there was a door behind the ſtage.

The audience were in little leſs confuſion than they; for as the houſe was compoſed chiefly of wood, every one expected it would ſoon be conſumed to aſhes.

The horror and diſtraction of my mind almoſt deprived me of the power of motion. My life was in imminent danger; for I was ſcorched with the fire, before I could get at any diſtance from the ſtage, though the people were ruſhing out as faſt as they could.

The lady who was with me was exceedingly frightened; but being under her huſband's care, had a little more courage than I had. He caught her round the waiſt, and lifted her over the benches, which were very high, giving me what aſſiſtance he could with his other hand. But the terror and hurry I was in occaſioned my foot to ſlip, and I fell between two of the benches, and ſprained my ancle.

Some people puſhing to get out, ruſhed between me and my company; the exceſſive pain I felt, joined to my fright, made me faint away; in this condition Mr. Faulkland found me, and carried me out in his arms; for my companion was too anxious for her own ſafety, to ſuffer her huſband to ſtay to give me any aſſiſtance, ſo that he had only time to beg of the men about him not to let me periſh.

I ſoon recovered, upon being carried into the open air, and found myſelf ſeated on ſome planks, at a little diſtance from the booth, Mr. Faulkland ſupported me, and two or three other people about me, whom he had called to my aſſiſtance.

Indebted to him as I was for ſaving my life, my ſpirits were at that time too much agitated to thank him as I ought.

He told me he had ſtepped behind the ſcenes to ſpeak to ſomebody, and was there when the ſtage took fire; that he then ran to give what aſſiſtance he could to the ladies that were in the houſe (obſerve he diſtinguiſhed not *me* in particular) and

and had juſt come in when he ſaw me meet with the accident which had occaſioned my fainting away, and when the gentleman, who was with me, was calling for help, but at the ſame time getting out as faſt as he could.

I now began to recollect myſelf; I was uneaſy at Mr. Faulkland's preſence; I wiſhed him away. I beſeeched him to return once more to the booth, to ſee if every one had got out ſafe, for I told him I had ſeen ſeveral of my female acquaintance there, for whom I was alarmed. With the aſſiſtance of the people who were about me, I ſaid I could make a ſhift to get to the neareſt houſe, which was not above a hundred yards off, from whence I ſhould ſend home for my chariot, which I had ordered to come to me after the play. He begged I would give him leave to ſee me ſafe to that houſe, but I would not permit him; and he left me in the care of two women and a man, who had come to be ſpectators of the fire.

With the help of theſe people, I con-

trived to hobble (for my ancle pained me exceedingly) to the place I mentioned, which happened to be a public houſe All the rooms below were full, and the woman of the houſe very obligingly helped me up ſtairs into her own chamber. I called for a glaſs of water, which was immediately brought me, and I deſired the woman to ſend ſome one to my houſe, which was about a mile's diſtance, to order my chariot to come to me immediately.

While the woman went to execute my inſtructions, I had thrown myſelf into a chair that ſtood cloſe to the wainſcot. I heard a bell ring, and preſently a waiter entered, and aſked if I wanted any thing; I told him, No. He ran haſtily out of the room, and entering the next to that where I was ſitting, I heard a voice, which I knew to be Mr. Arnold's, aſk, Were the ſervants found? The man replying that they were not; Then, ſaid Mr. Arnold, tell your miſtreſs ſhe will oblige me if ſhe will let me have her chaiſe to carry this lady home. The waiter preſently withdrew,

and

and without reflecting on the particularity of Mr. Arnold's being there with a lady, about whom I formed no conjectures, I was about to riſe off my chair to go in to him; but being almoſt diſabled from walking, I was obliged to creep along, holding by the wainſcot; when a tender exclamation of Mr. Arnold's ſtopped me. My deareſt creature, ſaid he to his companion, you have not yet recovered your fright. A female voice anſwered him with ſome fond expreſſions, which I could not hear diſtinctly enough to diſcover whoſe it was; but I was ſoon put out of doubt, when the lady added, in a louder tone, Do you know that your wife was at the play to-night? Mr. Arnold anſwered, No; I hope ſhe did not ſee me. Mrs. Gerrarde (for I perceived it was ſhe who ſpoke) replied, I hope not, becauſe perhaps ſhe might expect you home after the play. Though Mr. Arnold, in his firſt emotion of ſurprize at hearing that I was at the play, was only anxious leſt I ſhould have obſerved him, yet he was not ſo loſt to humanity as to be indifferent whether

I eſcaped the flames or not: I am ſurprized I did not ſee her, ſaid he; I wiſh ſhe may have got out of the houſe ſafe. You are very ſolicitous about her, replied Mrs. Gerrarde, peeviſhly; there was one there perhaps as anxious for her preſervation as you are—The converſation I found here was likely to become extremely critical for me; but I was prevented from hearing any more by the woman of the houſe, who juſt then entered the room to aſk me how I did, and to know if I wanted any thing.

I had heard enough to convince me that my preſence would be very unacceptable both to Mr. Arnold and his companion, and I reſolved not to interrupt them; nor, if poſſible, ever let Mr. Arnold know that I had made a diſcovery ſo fatal to my own peace, and ſo diſadvantageous to him and his friend.

The meſſenger who had been diſpatched for my chariot met it by the way, and was now returned with it; I was told that it was at the door; and it was with diffi-

culty

culty I got down ſtairs, leaning on the woman of the houſe.

I found Mr. Faulkland at the door; he ſaw that I wiſhed to diſengage myſelf from him after he had carried me out of the booth; and though probably he did not take the trouble to execute the ſham commiſſion I gave him, which was indeed with no other view than to get him away, yet I believe he had too much reſpect to intrude on me; and came then with no other deſign than to inquire if my chariot had come for me, and how I was after the terrible condition he had left me in, ſitting at night in the open air, with nobody but two or three ordinary people about me, and thoſe ſtrangers. This was a piece of civility which humanity, had politeneſs been out of the queſtion, would have obliged him to. He told me the fire was extinguiſhed, and happily nobody had received any hurt; and that he had only called at that houſe to know if I were ſafe, and recovered from the fright and pain he had left me in. I thanked him, and was juſt

ſtepping, aſſiſted by Mr. Faulkland, into the chariot, when Mr. Arnold appeared at the door: he was alone, and I concluded, that having heard the chariot rattle up the court-yard, he ſuppoſed it was the carriage he had ordered for Mrs. Gerrarde, and came down to ſee if it was ready to receive her.

The light which the ſervant, who attended me out, held in his hand, immediately diſcovered Mr. Arnold and me to each other. I could eaſily diſtinguiſh ſurprize mixed with diſpleaſure in his countenance. He aſked me abruptly, How I came to that place? which I told him in a few words. The cold civility of a grave bow paſſed between him and Mr. Faulkland, who leaving me in my huſband's hands, wiſhed me a good night, and got into my lord V—'s coach, which waited for him.

Though I knew, from the diſcourſe I had overheard, that Mr. Arnold did not mean to go home with me, yet as I was now ſeated in the chariot, I could not avoid aſking him. He told me he was engaged

engaged to ſup with company at that houſe, and that probably he ſhould not be at home till late. I knew this beforehand, and without troubling him with any further queſtions, drove home.

I have thrown together the ſtrange occurrences of this evening, as well as the tumult of my ſpirits would give me leave: I ſhall now lay down my pen to conſider of them a little more calmly. My heart ſinks in me—Oh, that I had remained in ignorance!——

Is it poſſible, my Cecilia, that Mr. Arnold, ſo good a man, one who married me too for love, and who for theſe two years has been the tendereſt, the kindeſt huſband, and to whom I never gave the moſt diſtant ſhadow of offence, ſhould at laſt be led into—I cannot name it—dare not think of it—yet a hundred circumſtances recur to my memory, which now convince me I am unhappy! If I had not been blind, I might have ſeen it ſooner, I recollect ſome paſſages, which ſatisfy me that Mr. Arnold's acquaintance with Mrs. Gerrarde did not commence

at South-park. I remember lady V—— once aſked me, Had ſhe and I been acquainted in London? I ſaid, No. My lord laughed, and in his blunt way ſaid, I will ſwear your huſband was, for I have ſeen him hand her out from the play more than once. I never aſked Mr. Arnold about this; it made no impreſſion on me at the time it was ſpoke, and went quickly out of my thoughts.

'Tis one o'clock: I hear Mr. Arnold ring at the outer gate; I tremble all over, and feel as if I feared to ſee him. Yet why ſhould I fear; *I* have not injured *him*.

September 2.——Mr. Arnold ſtaid long enough in his dreſſing-room after he came in laſt at night, to give me time to go to-bed before he came up ſtairs. Not a word paſſed between us: I ſlept not the whole night; whether he did or not I cannot tell. He aſked me this morning, when I roſe, how I did: I told him in great pain. My ancle was prodigiouſly ſwelled, and turned quite black, for I had

had neglected it laſt night. He ſaid, you had better let a ſurgeon ſee it, and went careleſsly out of the room. How new is unkindneſs to me, my friend! you know I have not been uſed to it. Mr. Arnold adds cruelty to—but let it be ſo; far be reproaches or complaints from my lips; to you only, my ſecond ſelf, ſhall I utter them; to you I am bound by ſolemn promiſe, and reciprocal confidence, to diſcloſe the inmoſt ſecrets of my ſoul, and with you they are as ſafe as in my own breaſt.——

I am once more compoſed, and determined on my behaviour. I have not a doubt remaining of Mr. Arnold's infidelity; but let me not aggravate my own griefs, nor to a vicious world juſtify my huſband's conduct, by bringing any reproach on my own. The ſilent ſufferings of the injured muſt, to a mind not ungenerous, be a ſharper rebuke than it is in the power of language to inflict.

But this is not all: I muſt endeavour, if poſſible, to ſkreen Mr. Arnold from cenſure.

cenſure. I hope his own imprudence may not render theſe endeavours ineffectual. I am reſolved not to drop my acquaintance with Mrs. Gerrarde. While we continue upon a footing of ſeeming intimacy, the frequent viſits, which I am ſure Mr. Arnold makes at her houſe, will be leſs taken notice of.

How Sir George would triumph at the knowledge of Mr. Arnold's deviating from virtue! How my poor mother would be amazed and afflicted! But I will, as far as lies in my power, diſappoint the malice of my ſtars; my mother ſhall have no cauſe to grieve, nor my brother to rejoice; the ſecret ſhall die with me in my own boſom, and I will wait patiently till the hand of time applies a remedy to my grief. —— Mrs. Gerrarde ſent a meſſage to inquire how I did. Conſcious woman! ſhe would not come herſelf, though ſhe knew not I had diſcovered her.

My dear good lady V— hurried to ſee me the inſtant ſhe had breakfaſted: Mr. Faulkland had told her of my diſaſter, and

and her tenderneſs ſoothed and comforted me much. She ſat by my bedſide two hours, and her diſcourſe alleviated the pain both of my mind and body; but now ſhe has left me, I muſt again recur to the ſubject that wrings my heart. Mr. Arnold is enſlaved to one of the moſt artful of her ſex. I look upon his attachment to be the more dangerous, as I believe it is the firſt of the kind he ever had; and no woman was ever more formed to pleaſe and to deceive, than ſhe who now holds him in her chains. Into what hands am I fallen! Mrs. Gerrarde muſt have heard my ſtory, and by the hint I heard her drop, what cruel miſrepreſentations may ſhe have made to Mr. Arnold! Mr. Faulkland ſhe can have no enmity to; but me ſhe certainly hates, for ſhe has injured me.

'Tis noon: I have not ſeen Mr. Arnold ſince morning; he has been abroad ever ſince he roſe; Good God! is this the life I am condemned to lead?

A new ſcene of affliction is opened to me: ſurely my fate is drawing towards a criſis.

Mr.

Mr. Arnold has juſt left me. What a converſation have we had!

After entering my room, he walked about for ſome minutes without ſpeaking; at laſt ſtopping ſhort, and fixing his eyes upon me, How long have you, ſaid he, been acquainted with Mr. Faulkland? I told him my acquaintance began with him ſome months before I was married. He was once your lover I am informed. He was, and a treaty of marriage was concluded on between us. You would have been happier, perhaps, madam, if it had taken place. I do not think ſo, Mr. Arnold; you have no reaſon to ſuppoſe I do. I had a very great objection to Mr. Faulkland, and obeyed my mother willingly, when ſhe forbid me to ſee him. I aſk not what that objection was, ſaid he; but I ſuppoſe, madam, you will without reluctance obey *me*, If I make the ſame requeſt to you. Moſt chearfully; you cannot make a requeſt with which I ſhould more readily comply. But let me beſeech you, Mr. Arnold, to tell me what part of my behaviour has given you cauſe to think

ſuch

ſuch a prohibition neceſſary? I do not ſay, anſwered Mr. Arnold, that I have any ſuſpicion of your virtue; but your acquieſcence in this particular is neceſſary to *my* peace and your *own* honour. A lady's being *married* does not cut off the hopes of a gay man. You give me your promiſe that you will not ſee him any more. I *do*, ſaid I; I will give up lady V—, whoſe acquaintance I ſo much eſteem: I will go no more to her houſe while Mr. Faulkland continues there; and I know of no other family, where I viſit, that he is acquainted with.

My pride would not ſuffer me to inquire where he had got this information: I already knew it too well; and fearing he would rather deſcend to an untruth than tell me his author, I declined any farther queſtions. He ſeemed ſatisfied with my promiſe, but quickly left me, as if the whole end of his viſit to me was accompliſhed in having obtained it.

September 8.——What painful minutes am I obliged to ſuſtain! Mrs. Gerrarde has

has been to ſee me, gay and aſſured as ever. She affected to condole with us on the accident that happened to my foot, with ſuch an overſtrained concern, ſuch a tender ſolicitude, that her inſincerity diſguſted me, if poſſible, more than the other part of her behaviour. She told me, ſhe herſelf had been at the play, but very luckily had got out without receiving any injury. I ſaid, I was ſurprized I had not ſeen her there. O, replied ſhe, I was in a little ſnug corner, where nobody could ſee me; for having refuſed to go with ſome ladies that aſked me, I did not chooſe to be viſible in the houſe, and ſo ſqueezed myſelf up into what they called their gallery, for I took nobody with me but my maid. Audacious woman!—Is it not ſtrange, my dear, that Mr. Arnold could be ſo weak as to humour her in the abſurd frolick of going with her to ſuch a place? For ſo it muſt have been; or perhaps ſhe appointed him only to call for her at the play; and he might have arrived but juſt in time to

aſſiſt

aſſiſt her in getting out. No matter which it was.

September 9.——I was born to ſacrifice my own peace to that of other people; my life is become miſerable, but I have no remedy for it but patience.

Mr. Arnold ſpends whole days abroad; at night we are ſeparated on account of my indiſpoſition; ſo that we hardly ever converſe together. What a dreadful proſpect have I before me! O Cecilia, may you never experience the bitterneſs of having your huſband's heart alienated from you!

Lady V——, that beſt of creatures, is with me conſtantly; ſhe preſſes me to come to her houſe as my ancle is now pretty well, yet I am obliged to excuſe myſelf. I am diſtreſſed to the laſt degree at the conduct I ſhall be forced to obſerve towards her, yet dare not explain the motive. Cauſeleſs jealouſy is always the ſubject of ridicule, and at all events Mr. Arnold muſt not be expoſed to this.

September 12.—I am weary of inventing

ing excuſes or abſenting myſelf from V—hall. My lady has done ſoliciting me, yet continues her friendly and affectionate viſits; I fear ſhe gueſſes my ſituation, though ſhe has not as yet hinted at it; but her forbearing to preſs me any more on the ſubject of going to her, and at the ſame time not requiring a reaſon for this breach of civility as well as friendſhip, convinces me, that ſhe ſuſpects the cauſe of my reſtraint. I am now perfectly recovered, yet do I ſtill confine myſelf to my houſe, to avoid as much as poſſible giving umbrage to lady V—: but this reſtraint cannot laſt much longer; Mrs. Gerrarde teazes me to come to her, and I have promiſed to make her my firſt viſit.

September 15.——Said I not that my fate was near its criſis? Where will this impending ruin end! Take, my Cecilia, the occurrences of this frightful day.

Mr. Arnold rode out this morning, and told me he ſhould not return till night. He aſked me, with that indifference which

which now accompanies all his words, How I meant to diſpoſe of myſelf for the day? I told him, I had no deſign of going abroad, and ſhould ſpend my time in reading, or at my needle. This was my real intention; but Mr. Arnold had but juſt left the houſe, when I received a meſſage from Mrs. Gerrarde to know how I did, and to tell me ſhe was not well, and much out of ſpirits, or ſhe would come and paſs the day with me; but that ſhe inſiſted on my dining with her. As I had told Mr. Arnold I did not mean to go out, I really had neither intention nor inclination to do ſo. But ſhall I confeſs my weakneſs to you? I ſuſpected that he purpoſed ſpending the day (as he often did) with Mrs. Gerrarde, and the more ſo from the queſtion he had aſked me on his going abroad; he thought I might probably pay her a viſit; and this intruſion was a circumſtance he had a mind to be guarded againſt, by knowing beforehand my deſigns. I had not been to ſee Mrs. Gerrarde ſince my recovery, and it was natural to ſuppoſe I would return her viſits. Poſ-

ſeſſed

ſeſſed as I was with this opinion, her meſſage gave me a ſecret ſatisfaction, as it ſerved to convince me Mr. Arnold was not to be with her, for ſhe generally detained me late when I went to her houſe. From what trivial circumſtances will the afflicted draw conſolation, or an additional weight of grief! So it was; I felt a ſort of pleaſure in thinking, that for all that day at leaſt Mr. Arnold would abſent himſelf from my rival!—My rival! mean word, ſhe is not worthy to be called ſo—from his miſtreſs let it be. In ſhort, I reſolved to go, eſpecially as ſhe had ſent me word ſhe was not well, and I knew my huſband would be pleaſed with my complaiſance.

I went accordingly to her houſe a little before her hour of dining, which is much later than any body's elſe in this part of the world. I found her dreſſed out, and ſeemingly in perfect health. She looked ſurprized when ſhe ſaw me; and I then ſuppoſed that ſhe hoped to have received a denial from me, and was diſappointed at my coming; though I wondered

dered that the anſwer ſhe received to her meſſage had not prepared her. This thought ruſhed into my mind in an inſtant, and I was ſure ſhe expected Mr. Arnold. I told her, If I had thought I ſhould have found her ſo well, that her meſſage ſhould not have brought me to her; for that I had determined not to ſtir out that day, till her invitation prevailed on me to change my mind. Sure, my dear, ſaid ſhe, there muſt have been ſome miſtake in delivering the meſſage to you; it was for to-morrow I deſired the pleaſure of your company to dine with me; for to-day I am abſolutely engaged. However, I am very glad you are come, for I ſhall not go out till ſeven o'clock. I was vexed and mortified: Either your ſervant or mine made a miſtake, ſaid I, for I was told you deſired to ſee me to-day; beſides you ſent me word you were not well. She ſeemed a little abaſhed at this: I *was* very ill in the morning, ſhe ſaid; and though I was engaged to ſpend the evening abroad, did intend to have ſent an excuſe; but finding myſelf better, I changed my purpoſe.

Dinner

Dinner was immediately ſerved, and I ſat down, but with a reluctance that prevented me from eating. I would have taken my leave ſoon after dinner, but Mrs. Gerrarde inſiſted on my ſtaying, and told me if I refuſed her, ſhe ſhould think I had taken ſomething amiſs of her. She called for cards; I ſuffered myſelf to be perſuaded, and we fell to piquet.

I played with diſguſt, and without attention, every minute wiſhing to break away. Coffee was at length brought in; I begged to be excuſed from ſtaying, telling Mrs. Gerrarde, I was ſure I prevented her from going abroad, but ſhe would take no denial. I was conſtrained to take a diſh of coffee, and was haſtening to get it down when the parlour door flew open, and lo! Mr. Faulkland entered the room. If an object the moſt horrible to human nature had appeared before me, it could not at that inſtant have ſhocked me half ſo much. I let the cup and ſaucer drop from hand: to ſay I turned pale, trembled, and was ready to faint, would be too feeble a deſcription of the

effect

effect this ſpectre had on me. I was ſenſeleſs, I almoſt died away. Mrs. Gerrarde pretended to be greatly alarmed; ſhe ran for drops, and having given me a few in a glaſs of water, I made a ſhift to riſe off my chair, and telling her I ſhould be glad of a little air, tottered to the ſtreet-door. I determined to go home directly, but the univerſal tremor I was now in, diſabled me from walking, and I ſat down in the porch to recover myſelf a little. Mr. Faulkland's having been a witneſs to the agony his preſence had thrown me into, did not a little aggravate the horror and confuſion of my thoughts. Whatever *his* were, he had not ſpoke to me, nor was it poſſible for me to have remarked his behaviour: I ſtaid not more than two minutes in the parlour after he entered. In this ſituation you will think my diſtreſs would hardly admit of any addition; but the final blow was yet to come. Mrs. Gerrarde had ſtaid a minute in the parlour to ſpeak to Mr. Faulkland after I went out, but preſently followed me, and was ſoothing me with

with the kindeſt expreſſions, when I heard the trampling of horſes, and preſently beheld Mr. Arnold alighting at the door. I now gave myſelf up for loſt. My mind ſuddenly ſuggeſted to me that Mrs. Gerrarde had contrived a plot upon my innocence; but how ſhe had been able to bring it about, my thoughts were not then diſengaged enough to conceive. My mind was all a chaos; I was not able to anſwer Mr. Arnold when he ſpoke to me. He ſoon perceived my diſorder, and inquired the cauſe. Mrs. Gerrarde took upon her to anſwer, that I was juſt preparing to go home, when I was taken ſuddenly ill. I was going abroad, ſaid ſhe, and as I ordered the chariot much about this hour, I fancy it is ready, and may as well carry Mrs. Arnold home; you had beſt ſtep into the parlour, my dear (to me) till it is brought to the door.

I am now able to walk, madam, ſaid I; there is no occaſion to give you that trouble. Mr. Arnold ſaid, I ſhould not walk by any means; and Mrs. Gerrarde immediately calling to a ſervant to order the

the chariot to the door, ſaid, as ſhe was going out, ſhe would leave me at home herſelf. Mr. Arnold anſwered, it would be the beſt way, and that he ſhould follow ſoon. The chariot was preſently at the door, and I was preparing to get into it, when Mrs. Gerrarde cry'd, Bleſs me I had forgot, it will not be ſo civil to leave the gentleman behind, without ſaying any thing to him. Mr. Arnold haſtily aſked, What gentleman? Mrs. Gerrard replied, Mr. Faulkland, *who took it into his head* to make me a viſit this evening. She went quickly into the parlour, and ſtrait returned with Mr. Faulkland; who bowing careleſsly to Mr. Arnold, and civilly to me, walked away.

Mrs. Gerrarde ſtepped into the chariot to me, and ordered it to drive to my houſe, leaving Mr. Arnold ſtanding motionleſs at her door.

A total ſilence prevailed on my ſide during our ſhort journey home, except to anſwer in monoſyllables Mrs. Gerrarde's repeated inquiries after my health. She ſet me down at my own door, and took

her leave without alighting. When I found myſelf alone, I began to conſider the conſequences of this evening's fatal interview; an interview, which, though unthought of by me, I judged was contrived to enſnare me. I laid all the circumſtances together, and endeavoured to unravel the clue. 'Tis plain to me Mr. Arnold was expected by Mrs. Gerrarde this evening. She ſent for me on purpoſe to betray me; the meſſage which ſhe pretended was delivered wrong, was only an artifice, in order to impoſe on Mr. Arnold, that he might imagine ſhe did not expect me. Indeed, he could not poſſibly think ſhe ſhould ſend for me on the very evening he was to be with her; and ſhe had ſo well guarded her contrivance that it was not eaſily to be detected. She had ſent her meſſage by word of mouth, though ſhe generally wrote them down on paper, but this way would not have been liable to miſconſtruction; ſhe had told me ſhe was engaged in the evening, yet detained me longer than I meant to ſtay. From the firſt of theſe circumſtan-

ces,

ces, it muſt appear to Mr. Arnold, that as I had come unwiſhed-for, ſhe wanted to get rid of me; the latter obviouſly ſerved her own purpoſe; for it is as clear as day-light that ſhe laid her plan ſo as that Mr. Arnold ſhould find Mr. Faulkland and me together. All this I have deduced from a long train of reaſoning on the circumſtances. But the inexplicable part of the myſtery is, how ſhe contrived to get Mr. Faulkland, with whom I did not think ſhe was acquainted, to viſit her at ſo fatally critical a juncture. Sure ſome evil ſpirit muſt have aſſiſted her in this wicked ſcheme: ſhe knew, no doubt, of the promiſe Mr. Arnold had exacted of me, never to ſee him. The apparent breach of this promiſe, ſhe may have art enough to perſuade Mr. Arnold was concerted on my ſide. But I hope I ſhall be able to clear myſelf of this cruel imputation to my huſband. Truth *muſt* force its way into his mind, if he is not reſolved on my deſtruction. Perhaps Mr. Faulkland may be ſecretly Mrs. Gerrarde's admirer, and Mr. Arnold is the dupe to

her perfidy, as I am the ſacrifice to her malice and licentiouſneſs.——'Tis all a ſtrange riddle, but I cannot remain long in this diſmal ſtate of ſuſpence; Mr. Arnold, perhaps, may diſcover her treachery, while ſhe is endeavouring to deſtroy me in his good opinion.

I am waiting here like a poor criminal, in expectation of appearing before my judge. I wiſh Mr. Arnold were come in, yet I dread to ſee him.

I might have ſpared myſelf the anxiety. Mr. Arnold is juſt returned, but he has locked himſelf into another chamber. I will not moleſt him to-night! to-morrow, perhaps, he may be in better temper, and I may be able to juſtify myſelf to him and diſpel this frightful gloom that hangs over us.

September 14.——Hopes and fears are at an end, and the meaſure of my afflictons is filled up.

I went to bed laſt night, but ſlept not; the hours were paſſed in agonies not to be deſcribed. I think all griefs are magnified

fied by ſilence and darkneſs. I well knew, prepoſſeſſed as Mr. Arnold was by my artful enemy, I ſhould find it difficult to excuſe myſelf, or perſuade him, that chance, or Mrs. Gerrarde's more wicked contrivance, had been the ſole cauſe of what had given him ſuch offence. I was reſolved, however, to vindicate my innocence, and was in my own thoughts, preparing my defence the greateſt part of the night. Towards morning, wearineſs and grief overpowered me, and I fell aſleep, but I enjoyed not this repoſe long. Some noiſe that was made in the houſe ſuddenly awakened me; I ſaw it was broad day, and looking at my watch, found it was paſt ſeven o'clock. I rang my bell, and Patty entering my room, I enquired if her maſter was yet ſtirring. The poor girl looked aghaſt. He is gone away on horſeback, madam, ſaid ſhe, almoſt two hours ago; and he ordered his man to put up ſome linnen and a few other things in a ſmall portmanteau. I believe he means not to return to-night; for he bid me to deliver this letter to you. I opened the letter with trem-

bling hands, from whence I received my doom in the following words:

"You have broke your faith with me, in ſeeing the man whom I forbad you to ſee, and whom you ſo ſolemnly promiſed to avoid. As you have betrayed my confidence in this particular, I can no longer rely on your prudence or your fidelity. Whatever your deſigns may be, it will be leſs to my diſhonour, if you proſecute them from under your huſband's roof. I therefore give you till this day ſe'nnight to conſider of a place for your future abode; for one houſe muſt no more contain two people whoſe hearts are divided. Our children remain with me, and the ſettlement which was made on you in marriage, ſhall be appropriated to your ſeparate uſe.

I have left home to avoid expoſtulations, nor ſhall I return to it till I hear you have removed yourſelf. Spare the attempt of a juſtification, which can only aggravate the reſentment of your already too-much injured huſband."

I have

I have for a while ſuppreſſed the tumult in my ſoul, to give you this ſhocking letter.

O my Cecilia! what a wretched lot is thy unhappy friend's! To be neglected, forſaken, deſpiſed by a huſband that I love! Yet I could bear that: but to be ſuſpected, accuſed too! to be at once the miſerable object of jealouſy and ſcorn! Surely they know nothing of the human heart, who ſay that jealouſy cannot ſubſiſt without affection; I have a fatal proof to the contrary. Mr. Arnold loves me not, yet doubts my honour. Cruel, mean, deteſtable ſuſpicion! Oh that vile woman! 'tis ſhe has done this; like a perſecuting dæmon, ſhe urges on the ruin which ſhe ſet on foot.

What can I do? Whither can I fly? I cannot remain here any longer; my preſence baniſhes Mr. Arnold from his home. If I go to my mother under ſuch circumſtances, it will break her heart; yet ſhe muſt know it. I muſt not wait to be turned out of my own doors. That thought is not to be borne. I will go this inſtant, no matter whither.

September 15.——God preſerve me in my ſenſes! I have paſſed two days and two nights I know not how; in ſilence and without food, Patty tells me. But I think I am a little recovered. I will write to my mother, and beg of her to open her arms to receive her miſerable child. I am collected enough, and know what to ſay.

I had juſt diſpatched my letter, incoherent as it is, and blotted with my tears, when Patty brought me one that had come by the poſt. I knew my dear mother's hand on the ſuperſcription, and kiſſed it before I opened it. See, my ſiſter, how the tendereſt of parents writes to her unhappy child, whom ſhe fondly believes to be the darling of her huſband, and bleſſed with domeſtic felicity.

My beloved Sidney,

I find age and infirmities are advancing a-pace upon me. My laſt illneſs ſhook me ſeverely, and has left a memorandum of what I may expect in the next viſit it makes me. Your family cares

are

are now ſo much enlarged, that I cannot expect, nor do I deſire that you ſhould undertake a journey to Sidney Caſtle to pay me a ſhort viſit; yet my dear, as you are the comfort of my age, I cannot, in the preſent precarious ſtate of my health, bear to be at ſuch a diſtance from you; while God permits me ſtrength I will lay hold of his bounty, and endeavour to get to London. You have told me that you are not conveniently circumſtanced at South-park as to room; I will not therefore incommode you, but ſhall content myſelf with waiting your arrival in town, at your houſe in St. James's-ſtreet; but do not haſten your departure from the country on this account. I am in no immediate danger, my dear, only willing to lay hold of an interval of health, to get nearer to you. If God prolongs my life, what joy will it be to me to ſpend next winter with my darling, and her dear good Arnold, and to feaſt my eyes with my lovely grandchildren!

If I am called from you, I ſhall have the comfort of my child's affectionate

hands to close my eyes; and shall leave the world without regret, as I have lived to see my Sidney happy in the arms of a good man, who will supply the loss of parents, and unite in himself those tender ties which nature must soon dissolve.

My prayers for yours, and my dear son's prosperity, I never fail to offer up to heaven. Your brother George is with me, and desires to be remembered to you; he proposes staying here the greatest part of the winter.

As I hope to reach London by the latter end of the week, direct your next to me at your own house in town.

I am,

My dear love,

Your most sincerely

affectionate mother,

DOROTHY BIDULPH.

My heart is bursting——O Cecilia! What will become of my fond, my dear, venerable parent, when she finds this daughter, this comfort of her age, this beloved of her soul, a poor abandoned cut-

outcaſt; loſt to her huſband's love, turned out of his doors, deſpiſed, diſgraced! My children too——I muſt leave them behind——My God, for what calamities haſt thou ordained thy creature! Tears, tears, you may well flow!

So! I am relieved, and will endeavour to fortify my ſoul againſt the two events, that appear to me horrid as an approaching execution to a guilty wretch, the parting with my children, and the meeting with my mother. As the letter I wrote will miſs of her at Sidney Caſtle, I ſhall write to London, to prepare her to receive the wretch whom her imagination has figured to her ſo happy.

Lady V—! I hear her coming up ſtairs —I cannot conceal my affliction, nor my diſgrace.

Lady V— has left me: left me in aſtoniſhment and new horror. Mrs. Gerrarde! Who do you think Mrs. Gerrarde is? She is the aunt of Miſs Burchell, that aunt who betrayed her to deſtruction. Sure this woman was ſent into the world for a ſcourge!

I can

I cannot collect myſelf to tell you with any method, the converſation that paſſed between Lady V— and me. She found me with the marks of tears on my face; they ſtreamed again at the ſight of her; I could not conceal the cauſe, and I put Mr. Arnold's letter into her hands, for I was not able to tell her the purport of it.

This is Mrs. Gerrarde's doing, ſaid ſhe: the deteſtable creature! How could ſhe work on your infatuated huſband, to drive him ſuch horrid lengths? I know not, ſaid I, but I hope my lady V— believes me innocent. Innocent! ſhe exclaimed: My dear creature, your ſufferings almoſt make me mad. Do you know that Mrs. Gerrarde has an intrigue with your huſband? I fear ſo, madam, I replied, but I hoped it was not public. Poor child, ſaid lady V—, his attachment to her has been no ſecret, ever ſince he came down to this country, though probably you were the laſt to ſuſpect it. I have often dreaded the conſequences of it, but never imagined it would have come

to

to this; I always had a bad opinion of the woman, and only kept up a face of civility to her in her huſband's time, on account of her niece, a charming girl that then lived with her; but ſince Miſs Burchell has left her, I have almoſt dropt my acquaintance with her; though my lord, who had an old friendſhip for captain Gerrarde, perſuades me to be civil to her.

The name of Miſs Burchell had ſtruck me ſpeechleſs. The clue was now unravelled. With what an unremitting zeal has this baſe woman gone on in her career of iniquity? Lady V—, who was intirely taken up with the thoughts of my unhappineſs, took no notice of my ſilence or confuſion. What do you mean to do, my dear Mrs. Arnold? ſaid ſhe. Do you think it is not poſſible by the interpoſition of friends, to diſabuſe your unfortunate huſband? For unfortunate he is, in a higher degree than yourſelf, as you have conſcious innocence to ſupport you. Oh madam, ſaid I, it is vain to think of it! Mrs. Gerrarde has ſtruck the blow effec-

effectually. Were Mr. Arnold left to the workings of his own heart, he might, perhaps, relent; but that woman, like my evil genius and his, will take care to keep his ſuſpicions alive. She poſſeſſes his whole heart, and my removal is become neceſſary to the quiet of them both. I have taken my reſolution, I will immediately quit this houſe, and leave it to a righteous God to vindicate me in his own time. You ſhould go no where but to my houſe, ſaid lady V—, with tears in her eyes, but that I think it an improper ſituation for you, while Mr. Faulkland is my gueſt. He will be diſtracted when he hears of this. I conjured lady V— not to tell him: My being parted from my huſband cannot long be a ſecret, ſaid I, but the cauſe may. Lady V— told me that Mr. Faulkland was that very morning ſet out for Sidney Caſtle to ſee my brother, having received a letter from him the day before, in which he told him that my mother was going in a day or two to London, and begged he would come and ſpend a week with him. She added,

added, Mr. Faulkland purpoſed doing ſo, and then to return to V—hall, as my lord had obtained a promiſe from him to ſtay ſome time longer with them; at leaſt till the old lady's affairs were ſettled, who had left her fortune to Mr. Faulkland, and to whom my lord V— was executor.

I told lady V—, I depended on her friendſhip to keep this affair a ſecret from Mr. Faulkland, leſt the heat of his temper ſhould make him take ſuch notice of it, as might render my ſeparation from Mr. Arnold doubly injurious to my character. Lady V— ſaw the neceſſity of this caution, and promiſed to obſerve it. She expreſſed great ſurprize at Mr. Faulkland's viſiting Mrs. Gerrarde, whom ſhe ſaid, ſhe did not imagine he had been acquainted with. He is no ſtranger, ſaid ſhe, to your huſband's amour with her, as it has often been a topic of diſcourſe between my lord and me; and I can hardly think he would be ſo indelicate as to carry on a love-affair with ſuch an abandoned creature; eſpecially as I have

often heard him expreſs the utmoſt deteſtation of her on account of her robbing you of your huſband's affection; which I had obſerved for a good while. But there is no knowing mankind, added ſhe: if that ſhould be the caſe, you may depend upon it that vile Gerrarde has laid her plan deeper than we are aware of, and would out-ſwear us all, that Faulkland came to her houſe for no other purpoſe, than to have an opportunity of ſeeing you; who to be ſure, ſhe ſaid, had given him a private hint to meet you there. Now the worſt of it is, it is impoſſible to have this matter cleared up to your huſband, without Mr. Faulkland's concurrence, and that you will not conſent to. By no means, I replied, I would not for the world have Mr. Faulkland interfere in my juſtification. If the affair ſhould really be as you have ſuggeſted, a little time may, perhaps, diſcover this wicked woman to Mr. Arnold, and it will not then be ſo difficult to clear my innocence. At preſent, her influence

over him is too powerful for me to combat with; and I know he wiſhes for nothing more than to free himſelf from the reſtraint that my preſence lays him under.

Lady V— acquieſced in my opinion, and ſaid, ſhe hoped a little time would chace away the dark cloud that now hung over me. She ſtaid with me the whole day; it was a day of tears: the dear woman was quite ſubdued at parting with me. I ſhall ſee you no more, dear lady V—, ſaid I; I ſhall go to London in two days———Preſerve your fortitude, deareſt Mrs. Arnold, ſhe replied; the time will come when your huſband will repent of the bitter diſtreſs he has occaſioned to you: my lord and I will uſe our utmoſt endeavours to convince him of his error. ——We ſhall meet in London, my dear; I ſhall go thither early in the winter on purpoſe---Have courage---Your innocence *muſt* be cleared. I anſwered her not, my heart was too full. We embraced, and lady V— parted from me in ſilence.

I have

I have written to my mother, and directed my letter to St. James's-ſtreet. I would have her prepared for the ſhock before ſhe ſees me; a ſhock, which I fear ſhe will not be able to ſuſtain.

September 16.——Mrs. Gerrarde has never called or ſent to me ſince I was at her houſe. She has effected her purpoſe, and is contented without a triumph.

I am prepared for my departure. To-morrow I turn my back upon my huſband's houſe, and upon my children. I have been weeping over them this hour as they lie aſleep in their nurſe's arms. But I will look at them no more.—Poor Patty is almoſt dead with grief; ſhe would fain go with me, but I have perſuaded her to ſtay: I can rely on her fidelity and her tenderneſs towards my children; ſhe ſays, ſhe will be as precious of them as the apple of her eye, and will give me an account of their welfare from time to time. Sure Mr. Arnold will not turn *her* out too; ſhe is an excellent manager,

ger, and he cannot do without a houſe-keeper.

I have been debating with myſelf whether I ſhould write to Mr. Arnold or not, and have at length determined to depart in ſilence. It is an eaſy matter for the guilty to make as bold aſſeverations as the innocent, and nothing which I could now aſſert would make an impreſſion on him. Had I only his ſuſpicions to combat, there might be hopes: but his *heart* is alienated from me; and while it continues attached to another, I deſpair of his liſtening to the voice of reaſon or of juſtice. If ever his eyes are opened, his error will prove ſufficient puniſhment to him—Perhaps my mother or my brother may put me in a way—My conduct, in time, I hope, may juſtify me—Mean while I will not condeſcend to the weak juſtification of words.

September 18.——I have bid adieu to South-park, and arrived this morning in London in a hired carriage; for I would

would not take one of Mr. Arnold's. I found my mother at the houſe in St. James's-ſtreet, where I now am: ſhe got here laſt night, and my letter had thrown her into agonies, from which ſhe had not yet recovered. What have you wrote to me? ſaid ſhe, as ſhe held me in her arms; your dreadful letter has almoſt killed me. —Sure, ſure, my dear child, it cannot be true that you have left your huſband! What is the cauſe? What have *you* done? or, What has *he* done? I begged my mother to compoſe herſelf a little, and then related to her every circumſtance, in the ſame manner you have had them, as they occurred. Her lamentations pierced my heart; ſhe wrung her hands in bitterneſs of anguiſh; Why did not the grave hide me, ſaid ſhe, before I ſaw ſhame and ſorrow heaped upon my child! I came to die in peace with you—You might have lengthened my days for a while—But you cut them off—My eyes will cloſe in affliction—A wounded ſpirit who can bear! Had you died in your cradle, we had both

both been happy. My child would now have been a cherub! an angel you have been in my eyes, and I am puniſhed for it; but that was *my* crime, not your's. But you are a martyr to the crimes of others.

My mother wept not all this time; I wiſhed ſhe had; her paſſionate looks and tones affected me more than tears could. My eyes began to run over, her's ſoon accompanied me, and it a little relieved the vehemence of her grief.

She then began to reproach herſelf for having liſtened to lady Grimſton's ſuggeſtions in favour of Mr. Arnold, and for her own ſoliciting this fatal marriage. But I ſtopped her on a ſubject which I knew would ſo much torment her thoughts. I conjured her not to reflect on it in that manner; I told her I knew ſhe had acted for the beſt, and that nothing but an extraordinary fatality, which could neither be foreſeen nor avoided, had made me unhappy. I ſaid I was ſure Mr. Arnold had been ſeduced by the

wiles

wiles of a wicked woman, for that he was by nature a good man, and that he had more of my pity than of my reſentment.

I found it neceſſary to reconcile my mother to herſelf on this head; ſhe ſeemed willing to lay hold on the hint, and turned all her indignation againſt Mrs. Gerrarde. A *practiſed* ſinner, ſhe called her, for whom nothing could be ſaid in extenuation of her crime.

We now turned our thoughts towards fixing on ſome other abode. You may be ſure Mr. Arnold's houſe is no place for us; and my mother declared, ſhe would not ſtay another night in it: accordingly we have diſpatched her maid to take us lodgings immediately.

September 21.—We have quickly ſhifted the ſcene, my dear Cecilia, and are ſettled, at leaſt for the preſent, in very handſome lodgings in St. Alban's-ſtreet. We came to them laſt night, and my mother ſeems a little leſs diſturbed than ſhe was. I pray God ſpare her life, but I fear I

ſhall

ſhall not long enjoy that bleſſing. She is ſadly altered ſince I laſt ſaw her; a dropſical complaint is ſtealing on her faſt, her legs are ſwelled, and ſhe has intirely loſt her appetite; yet if her mind were a little more at eaſe, I ſhould hope, that by the aſſiſtance ſhe can have here, ſhe might be enabled to hold out againſt this diſorder for a good while. I endeavour to ſuppreſs my own grief, that I may not increaſe her's.

END *of the* FIRST VOLUME.

BRITISH
10 MY 72
MUSEUM